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SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

AN EPISODE

BY
MATTHEW ARNOLD

WITH
An Introduction, Illustrative matter from the Shah Nama of
Firdausi, and Notes

BY
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INTRODUCTION

Opinions are divided as to the relative merits of the poetical and prose works of Matthew Arnold¹; but there is a large and growing number who look back with regret upon the hour when he abandoned poetry for criticism, even though that gracious type of culture whose essence is light and sweetness gained thereby its first professed apostle.

Arnold published his first volume of verses in 1849, when he was twenty-five years of age. It bore the title *A Stray Reveller and Other Poems*, and was followed within three years by *Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems*. Both of these volumes were signed "A," and it was not until the year 1853 that the name of Matthew Arnold first made its appearance on the list of England's poets. A portion of the collection published in that year under his own name was reprinted from the earlier volumes, but it also contained several new poems, far superior to anything that had hitherto come from his pen. There were many who, from the first, recognized in these verses the touch of a master hand. Neither these nor the subsequent volumes² ever became popular in the wide sense of that word, and Arnold has remained to this day a poet of the schools, worshiped by a chosen few who belong to the inner world of culture, and also, it is true, by that larger circle who mold their tastes according to the accepted oracles of literary criticism, but never winning his way, like Tennyson, to the hearts of the people at large. Never for a moment was Matthew Arnold the poet tossed upon the foamy crest of a literary or emotional fad such as that which in later years caught up for a while his own gospel of culture, or that which has made his

namesake Sir Edwin Arnold the darling of an hour with the indiscriminating multitude that snaps its fingers at the maledictions of the reviewers.

But amid all the fluctuations of popular and critical taste the appreciation of Arnold's poetical work has steadily increased, and it begins to appear as though he had achieved in this field, at least, one of those lasting reputations that give a true immortality. It is by no means improbable that he may still be admirably studied when some whom we now consider greater poets have been relegated to that outer Limbo of fame which is the happy hunting ground of the antiquarian and the blue-stocking.

Matthew Arnold is rightly held to have been in his literary creed a classicist, and in his religion a naturalist. But his views underwent a certain change, which is reflected in his poetical as well as his prose works, and in the style as well as the spirit of his poetry. Perhaps it would be truer to say that two currents of thought and taste ran through all his life, one of which predominated in his earlier years and the other in his later.

Reared by the celebrated Dr. Thomas Arnold, and educated under him at Rugby, he revolted against the Christianity even of so good a father and so broad a Churchman. He went through Oxford when the Tractarian movement was at its height, and was broadened and sweetened by it without yielding to its attractions; and he was still less influenced by the wave of scientific agnosticism amid which he found himself after he left the university.

Between 1853 and 1865,³ however, the spirit of Hebraism, as he called it — meaning the ideals, the world-outlook, as the Germans say, which we inherit from the Hebrew prophets and teachers through the Christian religion — reasserted itself in a measure, and in his best known essays (e.g., *Culture and Anarchy*, *Literature and Dogma*, published in 1869 and 1873,)

his Hellenism — his glorification of the Greek ideals in thought and art and conduct — has ceased to be unreserved and intolerant.

The change in his theory of poetic art is clearly marked. In the preface to the collection published in 1853, with which those to the second edition in the following year and to *Merope*⁴ in 1859 were in accord, he urged a return to classical models as the only remedy for the fantastic character and lack of sanity by which modern literature seemed to him to be characterized.

He condemned subjectivism — the habit of dwelling chiefly on mental states and interior conditions — and expressly taught that the highest art is always objective, and that the only legitimate field of poetry is the narrative, the description of actions worthy to be described.

But in his *Essays in Criticism* in 1865 he takes a broader view:

“The grand power of poetry is its interpretative power, and that it develops in two ways — by expressing with magical felicity the physiognomy and movement of the outer world . . . and expressing with inspired conviction the ideas and laws of the inward world of man’s moral and spiritual nature.”⁵

Meanwhile his artistic intuitions or his soul’s craving for expression had outrun his colder thought, and one of the most subjective of his longer poems is also one of the earliest — *Empedocles on Etna*,⁶ which for this and other sins against the classic standards was excluded by its author from the collection of 1853.

“After 1854,” says the *Edinburgh Review*,⁷ “all his poems, with the exception of *Merope*, which he wrote rather as a professor of poetry⁸ than as a poet, show that, both artistically and morally, the exclusive domination of the classic spirit was overthrown.”

Taking the poetry of Matthew Arnold as a whole, it is divisible into two groups: the objective poems, which portray

actions or events; and the subjective, which find their theme in mental processes or are the expressions of the sentiments of the soul. To the latter group, which is much the more numerous, belong his lyrical and meditative verses, and those charming elegiac poems which some prefer to any other works of Arnold's pen.

The objective or narrative poems themselves fall naturally into two groups, according as they are romantic or classic in their subject and style. In one, it has been said, he is a painter and in the other a sculptor. To the romantic and more ornate group belong *Tristram and Iseult*,⁹ *The Sick King of Bokhara* and *The Forsaken Merman*. At the head of the classic group stand *Sohrab and Rustum*, and *Balder Dead*.¹⁰

As Arnold was a classicist and not a romanticist, and his own developed theory of poetry, modified but never abandoned, made the portrayal of heroic deeds the noblest function of the art, it cannot be disputed that *Sohrab and Rustum*, the masterpiece of his poems of the classic and heroic type, is on the whole the most thoroughly representative of all his poetical compositions.¹¹

It has also historical interest as the one poem which, more than any other, made good its author's claim to an honored place among the bards of modern England. It occupied the first pages of the collection of 1853, and was promptly recognized by the critics as a production of unusual merit and lasting worth. A writer in the *Westminster Review* for the first quarter of 1854 said of it:

"It is remarkable for its success in every point in which Empedocles appears deficient. Homer has furnished him his model, and taught him the great lesson that the language on such occasions cannot be too simple and the style too little ornamented. Perhaps it may be thought that he has followed Homer's manner even too closely.

"As a picture of human life in Homer's manner we cannot see why it should not be thought as good as any one of the

episodes in the *Æneid*. We are not comparing Mr. Arnold with Virgil; for it is one thing to have written an epic and another to have written a small fragment; but as a working up of a single incident it may be ranked by the side of Nisus and Euryalus, and deeper chords of feeling are touched in it than Virgil has ever touched."

It has been remarked that *Sohrab and Rustum* is almost the only poem in which Mr. Arnold has realized his own ideal of poetical composition. The highest poetry, he wrote, is that which depicts noble deeds and makes its appeal to the primary and permanent affections. It would be difficult for a poem to answer this description more perfectly than *Sohrab and Rustum*. It is here that we see in its perfection "the exquisite and clear-cut accuracy of touch" which is the chief note of his style; that "subordination and finish of detail" in which, says the Lord Bishop of Derry,¹² he can only be surpassed by the great classical writers.

One of the most appreciative tributes that has ever been paid to this "finest specimen of Arnold's Homeric manner" is from the pen of R. D. Stoddard:¹³

"The episode which it embodies is," he says, "one of the noblest that ever fed the imagination and vexed the soul of the poet. It is one of those great human actions that appeal to the great human affections, to those elemental feelings which subsist permanently in the race, and which are independent of time and place. He selected the most touching situation in the national epic of Firdausi, and recast it into English verse without sacrificing its Persian spirit. He reproduced his original with scholarly as well as poetical fidelity. To those who can read the recital of heroic actions without emotion it is naught; but to those who are capable of being moved with feeling and passion — the pathetic and tragic elements of life — it is the noblest poem in the world. It fulfills the old definition of tragedy, in that it awakens pity and terror, and it fulfills the highest definition of poetry, in that it is admirably planned, orderly in its development, transparently clear and vividly picturesque, manly, majestic, dignified, and, more than all,

vital with human interest. Written in the grand style of Homer, there is a distinction in it which no other English narrative poem possesses."

As important as is the position which must be assigned to this poem considered in itself, as a gem of English literature, it derives a very great additional interest and value from its subject matter, which is taken from one of the richest, and at the same time one of the least familiar, mines of story and song that the world contains, the literature of mediæval Persia.

Its very title reveals its origin in the great national epic of Irân, the *Shah Nâma*, or *Book of Kings*, of Firdausi. It is, in fact, the last episode of the saga of Rustam and Sohrâb, not translated or even paraphrased, but made the theme of an original poem in the classic style. It is necessary to remark that the reviewer last quoted errs in saying that Arnold has "reproduced the original with scholarly as well as poetic fidelity." As may be seen by a comparison with Firdausi's narrative (p. 34), he has departed from the original to an unaccountable degree, even as regards the setting in time and place, and the personal incidents of the story. Neither has he avoided the sacrifice of the Persian spirit; on the contrary he seems, either through lofty indifference or of set purpose, to have made no serious effort to preserve the local coloring of the episode. But this can be defended on the same principle which justified the Old Masters of Europe in depicting incidents of New Testament story in the midst of Italian or Flemish scenery. The poem is to be judged wholly from the standpoint of the literateur and not from that of the Orientalist. A better advised critic¹⁴ says:

"We do not doubt that the author of 'Sohrab and Rustum' and 'Balder Dead' has done wisely to disregard as accidental the national peculiarities of the literatures that have furnished his themes, and obtain the advantages of following the world's greatest epical model by assuming all the conceptions of the heroic age to be essentially similar."

On the other hand, it is true that for all those circumstances which give the theme its rare beauty and pathos, as well as for the general movement of the tragic episode, Arnold has relied wholly upon the Persian bard.

The story of Solirâb was handed down for many centuries in the folk-lore and the written chronicles of Eastern Persia, but the medium by which its details have been preserved to the knowledge of modern times is Firdausi's immortal poem.

Firdausi is often spoken of as the Homer of Persia, since he was the first and greatest of its poets, and the author of the epic which embodies the traditions of its primeval age. Like Chaucer in England, Dante in Italy, and Luther in Germany, he is in a sense the father of the living language of his country, and the resemblance between the spirit of his work and that of the Gothic romance has led many to compare him, with singular felicity, to Ariosto, in whose *Orlando Furioso* the medieval tales of European chivalry found at last a classic expression.

It is customary in Persia for poets to receive a special soubriquet or name of honor, and Firdausi¹⁵ is the poetical title of Abul Kasim Mansûr (937-1020 A.D.), a native of Tûs in Khorassân.¹⁶ The Sultân Mahmûd¹⁷ of Ghazni¹⁸ employed him to put into verse the traditional history of the kingdom of Persia, and he spent thirty years at his court while engaged in this colossal task, the result of which we have before us in the *Book of Kings*.

Many sovereigns of the Sassanian dynasty¹⁹ had interested themselves in the collection of materials for such a history, the national records having been destroyed or dispersed during the disorders of the preceding period, beginning with the overthrow of the old monarchy by Alexander the Great. Under the direction of Yezdegird IV,²⁰ the most learned of the mobeds, or priests of the national religion,²¹ under the chief editorship of Danishber Dehkan,²² made a final compilation of the annals of the kingdom down to the reign of Khosrû Parvîz

(A.D. 591–628). Hardly had this been done when the invasion of the Arabs took place, and the Annals fell into their hands with much other spoil after the battle of Cadesia, in A.D. 636.

The book was sent by the conquerors as a present to the king of Abyssinia,²³ who caused copies of it to be made and distributed among his friends in various parts of Asia; and thus in course of time it found its way back to Persia again.

For several centuries after the Mohammedan conquest Persia was subject to the authority of the Caliphs,²⁴ who attempted to destroy all the monuments both of its ancient political independence and of its ancient religion; but their authority became gradually weakened and the local governors one after another acquired the position of independent sovereigns.

Partly from a pure love of learning and partly from a desire to strengthen themselves in the favor of the people, who had accepted Mohammedanism without forgetting their ancestral glories, many of these began to pick up the broken threads of the national tradition.

Under such auspices, the old Chronicle of the Kings was translated from the Pahlavi²⁵ into one after another of the modern Persian dialects; and with the aid of a commission of learned Mazdeans (for a remnant of the people still remained faithful to their old creed) it was continued, by order of one of the Samanian²⁶ kings, down to the death of the last of the Sassanidæ (651 A.D.).

A growing love of elegant literature led in the tenth century to several attempts at the versification of episodes from these chronicles. The Sultân Mahmûd ruled in the old kingdom of the hero Rustam, and his political astuteness and sincere love of letters led him, in spite of his Turanian extraction, to surpass all others in his zeal for the carrying out of the great project of preparing a new history of Irân in metrical form. To this end he spared no pains and expense in collecting materials supplementary to the prose history already in hand; offering

liberal rewards to every one who would sell or lend to his librarians any manuscript which would be useful in the great work. Many especially important contributions were received from some of the noble families of Afghanistan²⁷ that claimed descent from princes and heroes of the olden days.

For example, the family records of the royal house of Sêistân,²⁸ to which Rustam and Sohrâb belonged, were found to be still extant, and in the possession of a member of that family, Serv Azad of Merv,²⁹ who gladly put them at the disposal of the poet laureate.

Firdausi recorded with scrupulous care the traditional data afforded by a study and comparison of the wealth of historical materials before him; and his epic was at the same time such a masterpiece of poetical genius that it immediately replaced, in the esteem of a people in whom the love of the beautiful predominated over every other taste, the prose histories upon which it was based. Copies of these almost ceased to be made, and in the lapse of centuries the most important of them have been wholly lost, or, if they exist at all at the present day, are hidden in obscure places which have not yet yielded up their treasures to European manuscript collectors. The Shah Nâma is therefore the most precious repository of the historical traditions of Persia. The value of these traditions is attested by their general agreement, when properly understood, with the information on the subject obtainable from other sources.

The Persians always call themselves Iranians, and their country Irân; the word Persia applying properly only to the present province of Farsistân, the Persia Proper of antiquity. The Persian traditions similarly are, or profess to be, the traditions of the whole Iranian race, which is spread over modern Persia, Afghanistan, Southern Turkestân³⁰ and Beluchistân.³¹ Modern Persia includes the ancient Media,³² as well as Farsistân, or Persia proper, but does not extend over the region around the Oxus³³ river and the Hindu Kush Mountains,¹⁷² which was

one of the earliest homes of the Persian people, and which may be said to correspond roughly with the ancient Bactria.³⁴

The Bactrians, Medes and Persians recognized themselves as belonging to a single race, which they called the Âryan, and we now know that there was a time when their ancestors formed an undivided people and occupied a land in Central Asia, known to them as Irân. From thence some of their tribes wandered over the mountains into the fertile plains of the Indus river, and became the ancestors of the Âryan Hindus,³⁵ while others went westward to the region around the lower end of the Caspian Sea (Media) and still others established themselves on the shores of the Persian Gulf (Persia).

Irân, whether in the original local sense of the country between the Jaxartes and the Hindu Kush, or in the broader modern one of the whole territory in southwestern Asia occupied by peoples of the Âryan race,³⁶ has from the beginning of its history been harrassed at frequent intervals by invasions of Mongoloid³⁷ peoples, pouring down across the Oxus from the northern steppes³⁸ or the mountains of Mongolia.³⁹

This region is called by the Persian tradition Tûrân, and the conflict between Irân and Tûrân is the dominant theme of the heroic legends which Firdausi records.

This conflict had something more than a local import. It is a part, and a very important part, of the tremendous struggle which has been going on for several thousands of years between two great world races and two rival civilizations. On the one hand is the Caucasian stock, especially the Âryan or Indo-European race, to which the European nations belong; on the other is the Mongolian or Uralo-Altaic race, often called, with reference to this very cycle of tradition, Turanian. The Âryan and Semitic tribes seem to have wrested from Turanian aborigines most of the land which they have occupied. But in return the Turanian hordes have again and again swept over southern Asia and Eastern Europe, and during a large portion

of the historic period have held sway over some of the noblest of the Caucasian races. Among the Turanian invasions best known to European history are those of the Scyths,⁴⁰ who possessed themselves of Asia Minor in the seventh century B.C.; the Huns,⁴¹ who invaded Europe in the fifth century of the Christian era; the Turks,⁴² who began the conquest of the Levant in the eleventh century, and ultimately reared the present Ottoman Empire on the ruins of the Byzantine; the Mongols,⁴³ in the thirteenth century, who under Genghis Khan established one of the vastest empires that ever existed,⁴⁴ and the Tartars⁴⁵ in the fourteenth century, under Timûr,⁴⁶ whose descendants founded the magnificent Indian empire.⁴⁷ From the fifteenth century to the eighteenth the ascendancy of the Turanian tribes was firmly established throughout the whole continent of Asia and the adjacent portions of Africa and Europe; but now the tide has turned again.

The conquest of India by the French and British, and of Siberia by the Russians, and the gradual closing in of these and other Christian powers around the constantly diminished territory of the Turkish and Chinese empires, is but another chapter in the same old story of the never-ending contests of Irân and Tûrân for political supremacy.

The most profound students of the Shah Nâma have recognized in it a number of independent cycles⁴⁸ of history and legend, the most important and interesting of which is the Cycle of Sêistân, which consists of the history of Rustam, king of the Sacæ, and his ancestors.

This cycle is the heart of the whole epic, and its most admirable element is the tale of the brief and unfortunate life of Sohrâb. The Persians themselves esteem the story of Rustam and Sohrâb more than any other portion of the poem, and the scene of the death of Sohrâb, in which it culminates, is the same which Firdausi's most important rival, Ansari, once rendered into verse as a specimen of his powers in the competition

between the seven chief poets of Mahmûd's court for the great commission which, afterwards awarded to the newcomer Firdausi, was so brilliantly accomplished by him in the production of the *Shah Nâma*.

European critics agree with the Asiatic in their estimate of this part of the epic. The elegant French essayist, Sainte-Beuve, says of it:⁴⁹

"The most celebrated episode of the poem, and one which is of a nature to interest us still, has for its subject the meeting of the hero Rustam and his son Solhrâb. This is a beautiful and touching story, which has traversed the world, and flowered out in numberless ballads in every land. Many poets have handled it in their own way, or invented it anew, down to Ossian⁵⁰ in his poem of Carthou, and Voltaire in his *Henriade*. Voltaire assuredly had not read Firdausi, but he had the same idea, that of a father encountering his son in a combat and killing him before recognizing him. The thought of Voltaire is wholly philosophic and humane; he wishes to inspire a horror for civil war. Firdausi in his recital drawn from tradition is far from having had so explicit an intention; but it is safe to say that if, after reading this dramatic and touching episode, this adventure full of colors at first, and perfumes, and finally of tears, one chances to open the eighth canto of the *Henriade*, one feels how great is the height from which the epic has fallen among moderns; and an impression is experienced such as would be produced by passing from the Ganges river to a pond at Versailles."

Mr. Arnold's poem based on this crowning episode of the Iranian epic will serve, we trust, to whet the appetite of the student for the reading of the Persian sagas themselves, which have been rendered in various forms into several of the principal European languages.

No person of culture can any longer afford to be ignorant of the *Shah Nâma*, now that it is so readily accessible, for it is one of the great epic poems of the world, belonging to the same class with the *Nibelungenlied* of Germany,⁵¹ the *Mahâbhârata*⁵²

and Ramâyana⁵³ of India, and the Iliad and Odyssey of Greece. It has all the vigor of the sagas of northern Europe, but shot through with the golden lights of a southern sun, and softened by the touch of a higher culture. The roots of the earlier cycles of myth and hero-lore out of which it is built up run back mysteriously into the distant splendors of that age which produced the first hymns of the Avesta⁵⁴ and the Veda,⁵⁵ and from these an unbroken tradition brings us forward into the light of authentic history.

As for Rustam himself, its most prodigious hero, his story is as sublime and impressive as those of the other great characters of heroic legend, and contains more historical elements than most of them. From every point of view he deserves as high a place as Achilles, or Ulysses, or Siegfried,⁵⁶ or Roland,⁵⁷ or the Cid,⁵⁸ or Râma,⁵⁹ or Perseus, or even Hercules himself. In some respects he resembles Siegfried more nearly than any of the others, but he is a figure vastly more significant, whether we consider the unique importance of the theatre of his activity, or the greater antiquity of the age at which he is reputed to have lived.

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THE TRADITIONAL HISTORY OF IRÂN
FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE DEATH OF RUSTAM
ACCORDING TO THE SHAH NÂMA ⁶⁰

The first to sit upon the throne of Irân was Kaiumers,⁶¹ who lived in the mountains and clad himself and his people in tiger skins, but taught them the first rudiments of civilization, and was master of the whole world. Then the Evil Spirit, Ahri-man, sent out his son, a mighty Dîv,⁶² to destroy Kaiumers. Siâmak⁶³, son of Kaiumers, led a great army against the Dîvs, but he was defeated and slain.

Thereupon the king sent forth his other son, Hushang, and he was victorious. Shortly after this Kaiumers died and Hushang⁶⁴ ascended the throne. He reigned forty years, and taught men the use of fire, and the arts of agriculture and irrigation.

He was succeeded by Tahumers,⁶⁵ who introduced the arts of spinning and weaving, and conquered the Dîvs, some of whom purchased their lives by imparting to him the art of writing.

After a reign of thirty years Tahumers died, and was succeeded by his son Jemshîd,⁶⁶ who reigned for seven hundred years, and whose sway was acknowledged by Dîvs and angels, and even by the birds and beasts. He divided men into four classes, priests, warriors, husbandmen and artificers; and in his days the world was happy and death and sorrow unknown. He was the author of the calendar, and instituted the great feast of Neuroz, or New Year's Day, which is observed to the present hour. He also built great cities, with the aid of the Dîvs whom his fathers had subjugated, one of which was Persepolis.

At last Jemshîd's heart was lifted up in pride, and he caused his own image to be worshiped as God; and therefore many of the kings and nobles who were subject to him rose in rebellion and through their instrumentality he was delivered into the hands of King Zohâk,⁶⁷ the son of Mirtas, who ruled over Thasis in the desert of Arabia.

After Zohâk had seated himself upon the throne of Irân he oppressed the people, and favored iniquity, and caused two men to be slaughtered every day to feed the serpents that grew out of his shoulders, where he had once been kissed by the Spirit of Evil.

But after a thousand years God raised up a deliverer for Irân, who was Feridûn,⁶⁸ the grandson of Jemshîd. The revolt against the tyranny of Zohâk was begun by a blacksmith of Ispahân called Kâva, the father of seventeen sons, sixteen of whom had been slain to feed the serpents on the shoulders of Zohâk. He took the leathern apron⁶⁹ which he wore in the practice of his trade, and raising it aloft on the point of a spear led forth the people to Mt. Alborz to invite Feridûn to deliver his people and ascend the throne of his ancestors. Feridûn thereupon led the Iranian army across the Tigris, captured the tyrant's capital city in his absence, and afterwards defeated him and made him prisoner, binding him upon Mt. Demâvend to die of exposure and starvation.

Feridûn ruled for five hundred years, and the land prospered under his wise and gentle sway. He took several wives who were of the race of Jemshîd like himself,⁷⁰ and had three sons, among whom he at last divided his empire, giving to Selm the lands of Rûm⁷¹ and Khaver⁷² in the west, to 'Tûr⁷³ the lands of 'Tûrân⁷⁴ and China,⁷⁵ and to Irij the land of Irân,⁷⁶ together with his own imperial dignity. But 'Tûr and Selm revolted against their younger brother while their father was still alive and demanded that he should resign the imperial throne. At last 'Tûr took advantage of a friendly conference to assassinate Irij. But the daughter of Irij married a hero⁷⁷ of the race of

Jemshîd, and their son Minuchîr⁷⁸ succeeded to his father's dignities. Then Tûr and Selm gathered together their armies and invaded Irân, but after a long struggle Minuchîr overthrew them, and both the rebel kings fell by his hand.

Now about this time⁷⁹ the Paladin⁸⁰ Sâm, who had hitherto been childless, had a son born to him, beautiful both in face and limb, and was greatly rejoiced thereat. But when he found that the hair of the child was white like that of an aged man, he was filled with rage, fearing the mockery of his enemies, and commanded that the child should be cast forth out of his house.

The infant was laid at the foot of Mt. Alborz,¹⁴² and when the Simûrgh,²⁰⁹ who dwelt on its summit, saw the child she seized it in her talons and carried it to her nest. At first she intended it as food for her young ones, but her heart being moved with compassion she told them not to hurt it but to treat it as a brother and to share with it their feed. After the child had grown up into a strong and beautiful youth, Sâm heard of him, and, being repentant for his crime, sent forth his army to rescue him. They could not scale the heights, but the Simûrgh told the young man that the time had come for him to go back to his father Sâm, the champion of the world. The youth was loath to exchange the nest of his kind foster-parent even for the splendors of his father's court, but the Simûrgh insisted upon what she knew to be for his good. So she gave him a feather from her wing, with instructions to burn it if at any time he should need her assistance, and then took him up and carried him to his sorrowing father's side.

Sâm received him with great delight, and clothed him with rich robes; and he called his name Zâl, which means the Aged.

When the Shah Minuchîr heard of the adventure he sent for the youth and loaded him with presents, and bade his father have him carefully instructed in all the arts and virtues of the prince and the hero.

Zâl made such rapid progress under the instructions of his father's sages that he soon became famous for his wisdom and his strength, and when Sâm went forth to fight the Shah's battles he left his kingdom of Zâbulistân⁸¹ under the care of his son, who administered it to the admiration and delight of all his subjects.

Once while Zâl was making the tour of the kingdom he visited Mihrâb, king of Kabûl, one of his father's tributaries, who, though of the race of the serpent-king Zohâk, was himself a good and worthy man. While in Kabûl he became enamoured of Rûdâba, daughter of Mihrâb, and, after having with great difficulty overcome the opposition of his father and the Shah of Irân to such an alliance, married her, and carried her back with joy to Sêistân. That which had finally moved the Shah to give his consent was the prediction of his astrologers that the son of Zâl and Rûdâba would be the greatest hero who had ever lived, and would raise the glory of Irân to the skies. When the wonderful child was born his mother named him Rustam, which means Delivered, and there was great rejoicing throughout the land.

The boy soon began to show the qualities of a hero in an unexampled degree; and when he was only ten years old he overcame a mad elephant before which all the warriors of the court of Zâbulistân shrank in dismay.

In the meantime the Shah Minuchîr died and was succeeded by his son Nâder,⁸² whose cruelties were such that the people begged Sâm, king of Sêistân, to overthrow the oppressor and set the imperial crown upon his own head. He refused to lift up his hand against the royal house, but went to the Shah and by his prayers and exhortations restored him to the path of duty.

But Poshang, of the race of Tûr, hearing that the Iranians were discontented with the government of Nâder, bade his son Afrâsiâb make ready a great host for the invasion of their land. While he was engaged in preparations for this enterprise, he

was encouraged by the news that Sâm was dead and that Zâl was in Sêistân occupied in building a tomb to his father's memory. The two hosts met in battle in the plains of Dehstân⁸³ and after three days the Turanian army gained the victory. Afrâsiâb cut off the head of Nâder the Shah, and proclaimed himself the Lord of Irân.

Then the people sent messengers to Zâl in Sêistân, and begged for his counsel and assistance. By his advice they chose Zav,⁸⁴ the son of Thamasp,⁸⁵ of the blood of Feridûn, to fill the vacant throne. Under Zav the Iranians drove out the men of Tûrân, and the Oxus was established as the boundary between the two lands. After a few years Zav died and Garshâsp⁸⁶ his son reigned in his stead. His reign was also short, and after his death Poshang, seeing that the throne of Irân was again empty, sent Afrâsiâb⁸⁷ his son to take possession of the land. When the people looked for assistance, according to their wont, to the king of Sêistân, Zâl placed his son Rustam,¹³⁴ who had now grown to man's estate, at the head of the army. When they reached the shores of the river Rai,⁸⁸ a short distance beyond which the invading army was encamped, Rustam went, by Zâl's advice, to the foot of Mt. Alborz, where lived the young prince Kai Kobâd, of the race of Feridûn, and invited him to come and assume the imperial crown. So Kai Kobâd,⁸⁹ with his knights, accompanied him to the Iranian camp, and was crowned there with great splendor amid the rejoicings of the whole people. Soon the two armies engaged, and the Iranians gained the victory, chiefly through the prowess of Rustam, who from that day forward was surnamed Tehemten, which means the "The Strong-limbed." Then a new treaty was made, re-establishing the old boundary along the Oxus.

After reigning a hundred years Kai Kobâd resigned his crown to Kai Kâûs⁹⁰. And the heart of Kai Kâûs was lifted up with pride like that of Jemshîd, and he determined to under-

take the conquest of Mazinderân,⁹¹ the land of the Dîvs. Zâl and the other nobles tried to dissuade him from the project, for they said that no man could excel the skill of the Dîvs who dwelt there, and even Jemshîd in his pride had not dreamed of conquering them. But he would not heed their warnings, and prepared his army and marched into Mazinderân. They destroyed the first city which they reached, sparing neither women nor children, because they were of the accursed race, and possessing themselves of the gold and jewels and other spoil that they found there in abundance. Then the king of Mazinderân besought the assistance of the White Dîv,⁹² and the latter by his magic arts smote the Shah and all his army with blindness, and sent them as captives to the king of Mazinderân.

Kai Kâûs in his misery found means to send a messenger across the borders of Irân to Zâl, king of Sêistân. Zâl, who was now two hundred years old, sent his son Rustam to deliver his suzerain.

Mounted on his horse Rakush Rustam went forth and, after a series of formidable adventures, encountered king Aulâd, one of the tributaries of the king of Mazinderân, put his army to flight and made him a prisoner. Rustam spared his life and promised to give him the kingdom of Mazinderân on condition that he would guide him to the home of the White Dîv and the place where Kai Kâûs and his warriors were held in captivity. Soon Rustam encountered the army of Mazinderân and overcame it, taking the life of Arzang,⁹³ its general. Then, after releasing Kai Kâûs and his fellow prisoners, he went forth to the place where the White Dîv dwelt, and, going into his cave, conquered him in a terrible hand-to-hand conflict and cut off his head; and with his blood he healed the blindness of the unfortunate Iranian warriors. The campaign ended with the defeat of the king of Mazinderân himself and the annexation of his country, after which Rustam begged the Shah's leave to return to his father in Sêistân.

Kai Kâûs one day determined to visit the various countries in his vast empire, which extended from China to Egypt. While he was so engaged the Egyptians and the people of Hamaverân⁹⁴ revolted against Irân; but they were soon defeated, and the king of Hamaverân laid down his arms and asked pardon for his disloyalty. The Shah granted his petition, and afterwards, by the advice of his counsellors, took to wife Sudâva, his daughter, who was very beautiful. The king of Hamaverân very unwillingly let his daughter go, and shortly afterwards, while the Shah was feasting with him, caused him to be seized, with all the nobles who were with him, and imprisoned them in a lofty fortress by the seaside.⁹⁵ Sudâva refusing to be separated from her husband her father threw her into the same dungeon.

When Rustam heard the news he led an Iranian army against the king of Hamaverân⁹⁶ and his allies, the kings of Egypt and Berberistân, and defeated them with great slaughter. After delivering Kai Kâûs from his captivity he took the field against Afrâsiâb, now king of Tûrân, who had been laying waste the land during the exile of its king, and overcame him and drove him out of the country.

It is at this point in the epic that the episode of RUSTAM AND SOHRÂB occurs, for which see pp. 34-46.

It was only when Rustam heard that an heir had been born to his over-lord, Kai Kâûs, that he roused himself out of his sorrow for Sohrâb. His first act was to go to the king's court and ask to be allowed to bring up the boy and teach him all the warlike and princely arts which his rank required. He kept him with him for some years, and at last brought the young prince, Siâvush, for that was his name, back to his father, a model of wisdom and strength⁹⁷ and manly beauty.

Kai Kâûs having learned that Afrâsiâb was preparing to invade the land of Irân, sent Siâvush⁹⁸ against him at the head of the Iranian army, accompanied by Rustam as his coun-

selor and protector. They went by way of Zabulistân, and feasted in the palace of Zâl, and there they received reinforcements from the tributary kings of Kabûl and India. At Balkh they met the army of Afrâsiâb, under Gersivâz,⁹⁹ his brother, and defeated it.

Shortly after receiving the news of this last disaster Afrâsiâb had a dream, which was interpreted by his soothsayers to mean that Siâvush was to bring destruction upon Tûrân; and to avert such a catastrophe he sent presents across the Oxus to the camp of the Iranian prince and besought peace. Siâvush consented, by Rustam's advice, to a treaty, on condition that Afrâsiâb should restore all the lands that he had seized and send as hostages a hundred chosen men of his own blood. But when Rustam went to acquaint the Shah of Irân with the result, Kai Kâûs was angry, and commanded that Siâvush should put to death the Turanian hostages and carry on the war until the kingdom of Afrâsiâb had been wiped off the face of the earth. Rustam protested, and the Shah upbraided him, and said that Tûs¹⁰⁰ should go out in his stead as the guardian and champion of his son. Then Rustam, being in a rage, turned his back on the Shah and retired to his own kingdom.

When Siâvush received the Shah's message he was very much troubled, and after much consideration sent one of his counselors to return to Afrâsiâb the presents and hostages he had received from him and to inform him that the Shah had repudiated his treaty; and at the same time asked permission to pass through Tûrân, that he might go and hide himself away in some unknown land from the shame of his violated pledges. Then Afrâsiâb, by the advise of his prime minister, Pîrân,¹⁰¹ offered his hospitality to the Iranian prince, who, after writing a reproachful letter to the Shah, informing him of his resolution, chose out a hundred warriors of renown as a body guard, and went with them across the frontier into Tûrân. He was received

with great honor and abode in Afrâsiâb's court, and after a few months he took to wife the daughter of Pirân, and still later the daughter of Afrâsiâb himself, the princess Ferangis. Having received a kingdom from Afrâsiâb in fief, he built in it a great city called Gangdis,¹⁰³ and lived there happily with his noble and beloved spouses. For some time Afrâsiâb loved him as his own son, but Gersivâz,⁹⁹ the king's brother, was jealous of the influence and power of Siâvush, and at last accused him to Afrâsiâb of disloyalty and obtained permission to put him to death. But Ferangis bore to Siâvush a son, whose name was Kai Khosrû, and he was brought up under the care and protection of Pirân, who repeatedly saved him from destruction at the hands of the suspicious and timorous monarch.

When Rustam heard of the death of Siâvush in the land of Tûrân, he strode into the presence of Kai Kâûs, and upbraided him bitterly with the folly which had led him to alienate his only son. The champion then made ready a great army to avenge the death of Siâvush, and overcame the host of Tûrân in a series of battles, which ended in the conquest of the whole land. Afrâsiâb himself fled into the borders of China and hid himself from the knowledge of men, and Rustam ruled over Tûrân for several years. But the Iranian chiefs, fearing that Kai Kâûs might be guilty of more follies in the absence of the hero, sent for him to come back to the court, whereupon Afrâsiâb came forth from his hiding, gathered another army, regained his throne and invaded Irân again.

But the angel Serosh came in a vision to Gudarz,¹⁰³ who was of the race of Kâva the smith, and told him that the only one who could save his country was the son of Siâvush, who still abode within the Turanian borders. In obedience to the heavenly messenger, Gudarz sent his son Gav,¹⁰⁴ who, after seven years of search, at last succeeded in finding Kai Khosrû,¹⁰⁵ in the forests of Khoten, where he had been hidden by Afrâsiâb. The young prince proved his identity by un-

covering his arm and showing to Gav the mark that was borne by all the members of the royal house after the time of Kai Kobâd. So Kai Kâûs resigned the crown to Kai Khosrû,¹⁰⁵ who received the adhesion of all the kings and nobles of the land.

Soon the world resounded with the fame of the new Shah and the praises of his wisdom; and men came from all parts of the earth to do him homage. But his grandfather Kâûs had made him take a solemn oath to carry on the war against Afrâsiâb, and so, after reviewing the armies of Irân and its feudatories, he sent them forth under the command of Tûs.

Now Tûs had been instructed by the Shah not to pass through the land over which his half-brother Firûd ruled, who had been born to Siâvush of the daughter of Pîrân. But in order to avoid crossing the desert Tûs disobeyed the imperial command, and a quarrel arose, which resulted in the death of the prince. His campaign in Tûrân also ended disastrously, and Friburz, the king's uncle, who was sent to replace him in command, was equally unsuccessful.

Then Kai Khosrû shut himself up in his palace in a great rage and refused to see any one. So the nobles besought Rustam's intervention, and by his persuasions another great army was sent against Tûrân, but it was defeated like the former ones, until Rustam listened to the Shah's entreaties and took the field himself as of old.

Rustam once more overthrew Afrâsiâb and conquered his whole land,¹⁰⁶ and then returned into Zabulistân. But he could not abide in peace; for he was sent for again and again to defend Irân against its enemies.

Afrâsiâb having regained his own once more, and renewed his aggressions, the Iranians sent several new armies to dispossess him, and among those who fell in one of the battles which then took place was the noble-minded Pîrân Vîsâ, whom they had often tried in vain to detach from the Turanian cause;

and they buried him with great honor because of his ancient kindness to Siâvush and Kai Khosrû.

At last Afrâsiâb was overthrown with all his tributaries by the Iranians under Rustam and Tûr,¹⁰⁷ and fled for refuge to the court of the king of China. The latter was compelled by the Iranians to send him forth out of his borders, and after wandering in the mountains for several years the once powerful emperor of Tûrân was recognized one day by a hermit of the race of Feridûn, and taken before Kai Khosrû, who put him to death in revenge for the murder of his father Siâvush.¹⁰⁸

After this Kai Khosrû ruled over Irân in peace for sixty years, and then bequeathed the imperial dignity to his distant kinsman Lohurasp, and went into the mountains to spend his last days in penitential retirement and meditation.¹⁰⁹

Lohurasp¹¹⁰ reigned over Irân in wisdom, but his son Gush-tâsp¹¹¹ was discontented because his father would not resign to him the sovereignty. So he went into the land of Rûm⁷¹ to the city built by Selm, and did there such deeds of valor that the king of the country gave him his daughter to wife.¹¹² Lohurâsp, hearing of the prowess of his son, invited him to return and ascend the throne of Irân, while he himself retired to the temples of Balkh³⁴ to prepare for death.

Gushtâsp ruled worthily, and during his reign Zarathustra,¹¹³ the prophet of God, appeared in the land, and purified it from the power of the Evil One, and gave to it the Law. When Arjâsp, who sat on the throne of Afrâsiâb, heard this, he was angry, and sent messages to Gushtâsp bidding him to return to the religion of his fathers, and threatening to overthrow his kingdom if he refused. But Gushtâsp sent forth an army into Tûrân, under the command of his son Isfendiâr, and Arjâsp was put to flight. Then the Shah bade Isfendiâr go out and bring all the lands to the faith of Zarathustra. But in the midst of his glorious career his kinsman Gurezm¹¹⁴ accused him of conspiring against his father, and he was put in prison.

When Arjâsp¹¹⁵ heard that the hero he most feared was out of the way he fell upon the city of Balkh, burned Zarathustra's temple there, put to death the prophet himself and Lohurasp, the ex-Shah, and took the daughters of the latter captive. Gushtâsp came out against him with the Iranian army, but was defeated.

Then, by the advice of his lords, he released Isfendiâr and gave him the command, promising to abdicate the throne in his favor if he was successful. Isfendiâr¹¹⁶ broke the power of Arjâsp once more, but his father postponed the fulfillment of his promise on one pretext after another, and finally demanded, as a further condition, that first the prince should go to Zabulistân and bind Rustam the champion, and bring him into his presence; because he had ceased to render him homage and had not come to aid him against Arjâsp. Isfendiâr protested against doing this injury to an old man, ripe in wisdom, who had been the mainstay of the Iranian throne, but his father insisted, and so he set forth sorrowfully, with a great army, on the road to Sêistân. As he approached he sent his son Bahman to Rustam, and begged him to come with him in peace and allow himself to be taken bound before the Shah, as a mere formality to satisfy the monarch's caprice. The Sistanese hero-king indignantly rejected the proposal, but invited Isfendiâr to feast with him, and offered to go with him to the Shah, but in a manner suitable to his own rank and reputation. Isfendiâr refused to be Rustam's guest, but invited him to drink wine with him in his own tents. When, however, he had made ready the banquet, he sent no messenger to Rustam, and sat down without him.

Rustam on his coming protested indignantly against this lack of courtesy; whereupon Isfendiâr invited him to sit at his left hand. Rustam then said that his place had always been at the right hand of the Shah, so Isfendiâr commanded a throne to be set for him in that place of honor. But Isfendiâr took

care to provoke him still further during the banquet, and on the following day they met in single combat. Now Zarathustra had charmed the body of Isfendiâr so that Rustam could not hurt him, and when the day's combat was over Rustam and his steed Rakush were bleeding with hundreds of wounds. The champion still refused to yield himself and told Isfendiâr he would be ready to meet him again in the morning. He then swam across the stream and went before Zâl and Rûdâba, who rent the air with their cries on beholding for the first time their hero son so sorely wounded.

Then Zâl remembered the feather of the Sîmûrgh, and, when he had placed it in the fire as she had directed, the bird of God came flying to his assistance. Passing her wings above the bodies of Rustam and Rakush they were forthwith made sound again. Then she bade the champion make an arrow from one of the branches of a certain tree, and to aim it at the eyes of Isfendiâr, for there only could he be wounded. So on the morrow Rustam, after vainly trying once again to make peace with the prince, renewed the conflict, and gave Isfendiâr a mortal wound with the Sîmûrgh's arrow. When the prince felt that he was dying, he told Rustam that he had come against him and provoked him to combat unwillingly, at Gushtâsp's command, and he committed to him the care of his son Bahman.¹¹⁷

When Gushtâsp heard the news of his son's death he repented bitterly what he had done, and received with profound humility the reproaches of Prince Bashutân,¹¹⁸ his younger son, for having been the sole cause of Isfendiâr's death.

Now after this it happened that the aged Zâl, who had some time before resigned the throne of Sêistân and Zabulistân to his son Rustam, had another son born to him by a beautiful slave girl, and called his name Shagâd. And when Shagâd became a man he went to Kabûl, and took to wife the daughter of the king of that country. The latter, when Shagâd had be-

come his son-in-law, thought that he ought to be released from the tribute that his family had been accustomed to pay to the kings of Sêistân; but Rustam would not consent to release him from this obligation. The king of Kabûl, therefore, took counsel with his son-in-law, and the latter agreed to conspire with him for the destruction of his half-brother, the renowned champion of Irân. So by a concerted plan the king of Kabûl called his nobles together to a feast, in course of which he reproached Shagâd with his mother's ignoble origin, and also spoke lightly of Rustam himself. Then Shagâd pretended to be greatly offended, and came to Zabulistân and complained guilefully to Rustam of what the king of Kabûl had said. Rustam was beside himself with rage and began to make ready an army to punish the Kabulese monarch for his insults. But Shagâd persuaded him to take only a small band of knights with him, lest the king of Kabûl should think that he considered him a formidable antagonist.

At the approach of Rustam the king of Kabûl went out to meet him and prostrated himself in the dust at his feet, asking his forgiveness for the words he had spoken, as he explained, while his head was troubled with wine. Rustam, always as easily placated as he was quick to take offense, forgave him, and accepted his proffered hospitality. But the king of Kabûl had by Shagâd's advice prepared a great pit, lined with sharp spears and skilfully hidden beneath a light covering of branches and earth; and while they were out hunting together pointed out to him the way that led directly over it. So the hero all unsuspecting rode forward into the trap, with Rakush his horse, and the spears pierced their bodies from every side and wounded them unto death. Rakush died at once, but Rustam, putting forth all his prodigious strength in one last effort, succeeded in raising himself out of the pit and fell down beside it in his death agony. But his treacherous brother, Shagâd, stood by gloating over his destruction, and then Rustam knew that he

was his murderer, and succeeded in piercing his heart with an arrow before he gave up his spirit.

One of Rustam's warriors rode with all speed to Sêistân and told there the sad tidings; and Feramorz,¹¹⁹ Rustam's son, gathered together an army without delay and destroyed the kingdom of Kabûl, slaying the king and all his family and changing the whole land into a desert. And he brought back with great honors the bodies of Rustam and Rakush his steed.

Zâl and Rûdâba mourned for their wonderful son, and built a stately tomb, and placed Rustam in it with his faithful Rakush by his side; and the whole land of Irân was filled with such wailing as had never before been heard upon earth.¹²⁰

THE STORY OF SOHRÂB

AS TOLD IN THE SHAH NÂMA

One day the hero Rustam,¹³⁴ crown prince of Sêistân,¹³⁵ being troubled in his spirit, supplied his quiver with arrows, and went to hunt wild asses in the plains near Turân.⁷⁴ After he became weary of the sport, he rested and ate one of the animals, and then lay down to sleep, leaving Rakush, his horse¹⁸⁹ to pasture by his side. Some Turanian knights passed by, and seeing that the horse was an unusually fine one, lassoed him and took him away with them.

Rustam, on awakening, was much disturbed and grieved at the loss of his beloved steed, the companion of all his adventures, and set to work to find him. Following the hoof-marks he walked slowly towards the neighboring city of Samengan.¹²¹ At that time there was peace between Irân and its rival empire.

As he was about to enter the gates of the city, its king, with his nobles, came forth to greet the world-renowned warrior, who had been recognized from afar. On learning of his loss, the king promised to have a diligent search made for the precious animal, and begged him to accept his hospitality in the meantime. And while he was the guest of the king of Samengan, the princess Tahmîna visited him secretly, and told him that she had for years drunk in eagerly the tales of his wonderful prowess, and she confessed that her heart was torn with love for him, and with desire for a son who should be a hero like himself. If he would marry her, she would find Rakush for him, and place the whole land in his hands, and if he refused she would never accept any other mate.

Rustam, seeing that she was surpassingly fair, responded to her love, and, according to the customs of the times, sent a mobed or priest to ask her hand from the king. The sovereign was pleased at an alliance with such a hero, and the nuptials were celebrated with great rejoicing. But as Samengan was tributary to Tûrân, it was decided that the marriage should be kept secret from the people of both the rival empires. Soon the king's messengers found and recovered the swift-footed Rakush, and Rustam made ready to return to his own country. But before he departed he took an onyx which he wore upon his arm, and which was celebrated throughout the world, and presented it to his wife, bidding her to keep it carefully and give it to their child, if Heaven should grant them one. If it were a daughter, the precious stone should be bound amid the tresses of her hair, but if a son he should fasten it upon his arm and wear it as his father had done.

Time went on, and a son was born to Tahmîna. He was such a smiling babe that they called him Sohrâb, which means The Joyful. So rapidly did he develop towards maturity that when he had lived a month he appeared to be a year old, and when he was five years old he was skilled in arms and all the arts of war, and at ten he had the heart of a lion, and no one in the land could compete with him in games of strength.

About this time he went proudly to his mother to ask of her his father's name, whereupon she told him that he was the son of the unequalled Rustam, who was her rightful husband, and that he was therefore descended from the heroic race of Zâl and Sâm.¹³⁶ After showing him one of his father's letters, she placed the onyx upon his arm, as Rustam had directed, and gave him other presents of gold and jewels, which the hero had sent when the child was born. But she said to him: "Be careful not to make these things known, for Tûrân groans under the hand of Afrâsiâb,⁸⁷ and he is an enemy to the glorious Rustam. If, therefore, he should learn that you were

Rustam's son, he would seek to destroy you for your father's sake. Moreover, O my boy! if Rustam learned that you had become such a mountain of valor, he would perhaps demand you at my hands, and the sorrow of parting from you would break my heart."

As soon as he had thus learned his true origin he conceived the ambitious design of leading an army into Irân, to overthrow the Shah Kai Kâûs,⁹⁰ place Rustam on the throne in his stead, and then, with his assistance, conquer Afrâsiâb and unite his kingdom to the Iranian empire.

When he announced his intention of making an expedition against Irân the nobles and warriors crowded around him with enthusiasm and the king opened his treasures to the boy and granted to him royal honors. When the guardian of the court stables led the king's horses before the young prince for him to select a war horse for himself he tested them first by pressing their backs with his hand and found none of them strong enough for his use. But after many days of search he learned of a foal sired by Rakush, and found him all that he desired.

When Afrâsiâb learned that Sohrâb was showing the disposition of a hero, and was setting on foot an army for the dethronement of Kai Kâûs, he was greatly pleased, and commanded Human and Barman, two of his most trusted lords, to gather an army and offer their assistance to Sohrâb. At the same time he gave them a secret commission.

"I know," he said, "that Sohrâb is the son of Rustam the Paladin, but Rustam must not learn who it is that is going against him. Then perhaps he will perish by the hands of this young lion, and then Irân, Rustam being gone, will be an easy prey. Afterwards he will subdue Sohrâb also, and all the world will be ours. But if Sohrâb should fall at the hands of Rustam, then the grief that Rustam will experience when he shall learn that he has slain so noble a son will bring him down with sorrow to the grave."

So they came to Sohrâb, bringing letters and gifts from king Afrâsiâb, and the young prince was greatly rejoiced, and set forth at once with the united hosts into the land of Irân, dealing destruction as they went.

Soon they came to the White Castle, the most powerful fortress in that part of Irân; and when its guardian, Hujir, came out to meet the invaders and engaged their chief in single combat, Sohrâb overcame him and made him a prisoner. The hero Gustahem also abode in the castle, but he was grown too old to fight. His warlike daughter, Gurdafrið, however, rode forth to meet the young champion, and proved a formidable antagonist. But Sohrâb at last overpowered her, and when, on tearing off her helmet, he discovered that his antagonist was a woman, he immediately became violently enamored of her. He bound her with his lasso, intending to make her a prisoner, but she escaped him by a ruse and reached the castle in safety.

Her father called before him a scribe, and sent a letter to Kai Kâûs, warning him of the invasion, and then fled with his daughter and their retainers by means of an underground passage-way, so that when Sohrâb's army scaled the walls of the castle on the following day they found it empty.

When Kai Kâûs and his nobles received the writing from Gustahem, and read the description of the chief — a child in years, but a lion in strength and stature — who, with a great host, was laying waste his territories, they were much troubled, and agreed, as with one voice, that Rustam alone could save the nation in this hour of peril. The Shah at once wrote to the champion, telling him of the new catastrophe that threatened Irân, and bidding him hasten with all speed to his assistance. The brave warrior Gav was chosen to carry the message to Sêistân, and the Shah instructed him not to rest until he had placed it in Rustam's hands, and to return without a moment's delay when he had fulfilled the commission.

Rustam was much surprised at hearing that such a warrior had arisen among the Turks. After conversing with Gav regarding the new champion, he said: "I have myself a son in Samengan, but he is yet an infant, and his mother writes to me that he is fond of the sports of his age. Though he is likely to become some day a hero among men, his time has not come to lead forth an army. And that which you say has been done is very far from being the work of a child."

In spite of the urgency of the king's message, Rustam spoke lightly of the danger, and persuaded Gav to remain and feast with him before setting out on the campaign.

For three days they banqueted and made merry, and when with their army they at last appeared before the Shah he was furious with rage against Rustam, and commanded him to be hanged to the nearest gallows for disobeying his commands. Gav protested, and the Shah ordered that he should be hung also. But Rustam broke loose from the grasp of those who made a pretense of obeying the Shah's hasty order, and heaped reproaches upon the angry monarch. Then he strode out of the presence-chamber and sprang upon Rakush, and was soon out of sight.

But the nobles took counsel together and represented to the Shah how foolish his conduct had been, and urged him to reconsider his decision and endeavor to conciliate the champion who was the mainstay of his throne. So, by the Shah's permission, all the chiefs of Irân, headed by the venerable Gudarz, went forth in quest of Rustam, and, when they found him, prostrated themselves before him and begged him not to let the land perish because of the folly of its emperor.

After much reasoning they persuaded him to ignore the insult that had been offered him and come to the Shah's assistance.

When Kai Kâûs saw him approaching he stepped down from his throne and came before the champion and besought his pardon.

The next morning the Persian legions set forth to meet the invaders. When they reached the plains where the fortress of Hujir stood they pitched their tents before it, for it was still occupied by the army of Sohrâb.

When Sohrâb learned that the enemy were come, he rejoiced, and drank a cup of wine to their destruction.

Then he called forth Human and showed him the army, and bade him be of good cheer, for he saw within its ranks no one who could stand against himself.

After nightfall Rustam begged leave of the Shah to go outside the lines and try to see what kind of a man this redoubtable stripling was who led the invading army. Disguising himself as a Turanian he entered the castle in secret and found his way to the apartment where Sohrâb was feasting with his warriors.

Among the latter was Zinda, the brother of Tahmîna, who, as there was no one else in the army of Samengan who knew Rustam, had sent him for the express purpose of pointing out her hero-husband to Sohrâb their son, so that no harm might befall if they should chance to be opposed to each other in battle.

Now it happened that Zinda, having changed his seat, saw the dark figure half hidden in the shadows outside the door, and went towards him, asking him who he was, and bidding him come into the light that he might see his face. But before he could speak further Rustam struck him to the ground and then went back to his own camp, and a little while afterwards Sohrâb's slaves found their master's uncle lying dead, bathed in his own blood.

The next morning Sohrâb put on his armor and, taking with him the captive Hujir, went to the parapet of the castle, from which they could look down over the camp of the Iranians.

Pointing out one after another of the tents of the opposing chiefs Solrâb demanded of his prisoner whose they were. Hujir answered him that the pavilion in the center made of gold brocade adorned with leopard's skins with a hundred war elephants before it and a throne of turquoise within, and above all a violet standard emblazoned with the sun and moon, was that of the Shah of Irân; the tent on its right hand, with an elephant on its flag, was that of Tûs¹⁰⁰ the Naotaride; that in which many warriors in rich armor were standing, and above which was a golden flag emblazoned with a lion, was that of Gudarz, the father of eighty warlike sons; that which bore a wolf's head on its standard belonged to Gav¹⁰⁴ the son of Gudarz; that with raised awnings of Syrian brocades belonged to the Shah's son Fraburz,¹²² and that with yellow trappings belonged to Guraz¹⁰³ the lion-hearted, and so on. But there was a tent draped with green, and with a lion and a dragon on its standard, that Hujir did not name; the flag of Kâva⁶⁹ stood at its entrance and before it stood a champion of extraordinary height and of nobler appearance than any of the rest, and his war-horse near him seemed as mighty as he. It was the tent of the prince of Sêistân, and the man and steed were Rustam and Rakush; but Hujir feared to tell the young hero the signs whereby he might know the champion of Irân, lest he might fall upon him suddenly and destroy the mainstay of the land. Sohrâb questioned him with eagerness again and again regarding this tent and its formidable owner, but Hujir evaded his inquiries and when closely pressed professed himself ignorant as to who it might be. He suggested that it was probably a new ally from some distant land. Again and again Sohrâb asked him where Rustam was and he always returned the same answer—that he was not in the camp; but Sohrâb could not believe that Kai Kâûs would go forth to battle without the aid of Rustam. Finally he threatened to strike off Hujir's head unless he showed him the tents of Rustam. But the Iranian

preferred to lose his own life rather than to be the means of the destruction of his beloved land. So he gave a defiant answer and the prince killed him with a blow of his sword.

Sohrâb made himself ready for the fight and mounting his war horse rode out to the camp of the Iranians, broke down the barriers with his spear, and summoned the Shah to do battle with him, that the blood of Zinda might be avenged.

The Iranians trembled when they heard his voice of thunder, and saw his stalwart form, and the majesty of his mien, and none of the warriors around the Shah would accept his challenge in their lord's behalf. They cried with one accord that Rustam alone could compete with such an adversary, and Tûs hastened to Rustam's pavilion. The hero began to demur against such haste, complaining that he was always called on for the hardest tasks; but the nobles would not let him waste his time in words, and buckled on his armor, threw his leopard skin about him, and saddled Rakush. When he was mounted they pushed him forth, and called after him: "Make haste, for no common combat awaits you; for it is certainly the evil one himself who is standing before our camp."

When Rustam came out to Sohrâb and saw the youth, so strong and brave, and with a chest mighty as that of Sâm, he invited him to step out into the belt of ground that separated the two camps. Having pity on the noble young man, he sought to dissuade him from the fight, and Sohrâb, on his side, thought that he saw in his opponent the signs by which Tahmina had told him he might recognize his father. But Rustam denied his name, and asserted that he was not a member of any royal house; for he wished to put fear in his opponent's heart by making him think that the Iranian army had champions of still greater might than even his own.

So they fought until their spears were shivered, their swords hacked like saws and their clubs broken, and then wrestled and

fought with their fists until their mail was torn, their horses utterly exhausted, and their bodies covered with sweat and blood. Finally they stopped to rest, and thus far neither of them had the advantage. Rustam reflected that never in his life had he encountered such a hero, and said to himself that even the combat with the White Div had been nothing to this.

Then they fought with arrows, and then wrestled again, but with the same result. Finally they returned to their clubs once more, and Sohrâb struck Rustam such a blow that the champion reeled beneath the stroke, and bit his lips in agony. At this Sohrâb boasted of his advantage, and bade Rustam go and measure himself with his equals, for, though his strength was great, he could not stand against a youth.

So they separated, and Rustam dealt havoc among the men of Tûrân, while Sohrâb did the same among the Iranians. Rustam was sad at the lack of his usual success in the morning's combat, and when he saw how many noble warriors had fallen by Sohrâb's hand, he was roused to fury, and challenged the youth to come forth again on the morrow to single combat.

After the battle was over for the day Sohrâb, among his chiefs in the White Castle, praised the might of the champion with whom he had been matched; and he confessed in confidence to Human that he was filled with misgivings regarding that aged warrior. "It seems to me," he said, "that his stature is like mine, and that I see in him the tokens that my mother described to me. My heart goes out towards him, and I wonder if it be not my father Rustam; for I ought not to fight with him."

But Human, in obedience to Afrâsiâb's instructions, endeavored to dissuade him from this thought, and assured him that he had often seen Rustam, and that this man had no resemblance to him and wielded his club in an entirely different way.

When day dawned Rustam and Sohrâb came forward into the neutral ground prepared for the fight. Sohrâb smilingly sought a friendly reconciliation, and once again asked his opponent if he were not Rustam.

But Rustam refused to parley, and they fought the whole day, until, just at sunset, Sohrâb seized Rustam by the girdle, threw him to the ground, and, kneeling upon him, drew forth his sword to strike off his head. Then Rustam resorted to a ruse, and told the young man that the laws of honor required that when one brave man had overthrown another for the first time he should not destroy him, but should reserve him for a second fight, and then only might he put him to death. So Sohrâb let him go, and spent the night in deer hunting. The next morning Human asked him about the adventure of the day, and Sohrâb told him how he had granted the tall man his life and freedom after having thrown him to earth. Human reproached him for having allowed himself to be deceived, but Sohrâb told him that they were to meet for a third encounter within an hour, and that this time he should not escape him.

Meanwhile Rustam, after bathing his limbs in a running brook, besought Heaven for such an increase of strength as to enable him to obtain the victory. And while he prayed his strength became such that the rock on which he was standing gave way beneath his feet. And he saw that it was too much, and prayed that it might be diminished a little, and once more the All-knowing Lord granted his petition.

And when the hour for the combat was come, Rustam went to the meeting place; but when he saw Sohrâb coming forth like a mad elephant and defying him with a voice like thunder, he for the first time in his life had the sensation of fear, and prayed that God might restore to him the surplus of power that he had before begged him to take away. Then he closed with Sohrâb, and shook him terribly, with all his new found might,

and at last seized him by the girdle and hurled him to the ground so violently that his back was broken like a reed. But as he drew forth his sword to give him the death stroke, the young warrior, writhing in his agony, threatened his slayer with the vengeance of his father Rustam. When Rustam heard his words his sword fell from his grasp, and with a groan sank down in a swoon beside his mortally wounded son. When he returned to himself Sohrâb was still alive, and confirmed his former words by showing the onyx that he wore beneath his armor. When Rustam saw it he tore his clothes in his distress, threw dust on his head and refused to be comforted.

Meanwhile, the sun having set, and Rustam not having returned to the camp, the nobles of Irân were afraid and went forth to seek him. When they found Rakush standing alone they raised a wailing and returned and told Kai Kâûs that the champion of Irân must have perished. So the Shah sent Tûs to find out whether Rustam had really fallen, and commanded that if it were indeed so the drums should call to battle that they might avenge his death.

When Tûs and the nobles with him saw Rustam alive they broke forth in a great shout of joy, but when he told them of his terrible misfortune they were grieved for him, and joined him in wailing for his son. Rustam was so beside himself with grief at witnessing the pain of his dying son that he would have taken his own life, had not the nobles interfered to prevent the rash deed.

Then Rustam remembered that Kai Kâûs had a balm that was very potent for healing and begged Gudarz to go and entreat the Shah to send it to him. But Kai Kâûs refused to grant the petition, remembering Rustam's proud words, and fearing to have two such powerful and united vassals as Rustam and his son would be if both should live. When Gudarz returned from his fruitless embassy Rustam himself went to

implore the Shah to grant him the favor he desired, but before he reached the royal pavilion a messenger overtook him with the news that Sohrâb was already dead.

Then Rustam set up such a cry as had never before been heard on earth and heaped reproaches upon himself without end for his awful mistake.

And then he made a great fire and threw into it his armor and his leopard skin and his saddle, his many-colored tent, and his Syrian trappings and all the appurtenances of his throne. He watched them burn into cinders, and tore his flesh, crying, "My heart is sick unto death."

The army of Tûrân went back over the borders in peace, as Sohrâb had requested that they be allowed to do, and the body of the young prince, wrapped in precious brocades, was carried to Sêistân. Rustam and his nobles marched before the bier, with their garments rent, and with their heads bared and covered with ashes. The drums of the war-elephants and the cymbals of battle were broken, and the tails of the horses shorn to the root, and thus, with all the emblems of extremest mourning, the sad cavalcade came to Rustam's home, where Zal and Rûdâba, Rustam's parents, heard the true story from the lips of Rustam their son. Rustam built a tomb in the shape of a horse-shoe for Sohrâb, and the body of the young hero in all its costly wrappings was laid within it in a chamber lined with gold and perfumed with ambergris.

For a long time thereafter the house of Rustam had the stillness of the grave, and in distant Samengan the king rent his robes and Tahmîna threw earth upon her head and tore her hair and wrung her hands and rolled on the ground in her agony. And she caused all the garments of Sohrâb to be brought unto her, and his throne, and his steed, that she might look upon them once more. She stroked the horse, pressed his head against her breast, and wet his very hoofs with her

tears. She cherished the robes as if they still contained her darling boy, and she kissed the helmet he had worn. Then, according to the custom of the land, she cut off the tail of his steed in sign of mourning, and set his house on fire, and gave his gold and jewels to the poor; and within less than twelve months her spirit went forth to join that of Sohrâb her son.

SOHRAB AND RUSTUM

AN EPISODE

BY

MATTHEW ARNOLD

And the first grey of morning fill'd the east,
And the fog rose out of the Oxus¹²³ stream.
But all the Tartar¹²⁴ camp along the stream
Was hush'd, and still the men were plunged in sleep;
Sohrab alone, he slept not; all night long
He had lain wakeful, tossing on his bed;
But when the grey dawn stole into his tent,
He rose, and clad himself, and girt his sword,
And took his horseman's cloak, and left his tent,
And went abroad into the cold wet fog,
Through the dim camp to Peran-Wisa's¹²⁵ tent.

Through the black Tartar tents he pass'd,
which stood

Clustering like bee-hives on the low, flat strand
Of Oxus,¹²⁶ where the summer-floods o'erflow
When the sun melts the snows in high Pamere;¹²⁷
Through the black tents he pass'd, o'er that low strand,
And to a hillock came, a little back
From the stream's brink—the spot where first a boat,
Crossing the stream in summer, scrapes the land.
The men of former times had crown'd the top
With a clay fort: but that was fall'n, and now

The Tartars built there Peran-Wisa's tent,
A dome of laths,¹²⁸ and o'er it felts were spread.
And Sohrab came there, and went in, and stood
Upon the thick-piled¹²⁹ carpets in the tent,
And found the old man sleeping on his bed
Of rugs and felts, and near him lay his arms.
And Peran-Wisa¹²⁵ heard him, though the step
Was dull'd; for he slept light, an old man's sleep;
And he rose quickly on one arm, and said:

“Who art thou? for it is not yet clear dawn.
Speak! Is there any news, or any night alarm?”

But Sohrab came to the bedside, and said:—

“Thou know'st me, Peran-Wisa! it is I.

The sun is not yet risen, and the foe
Sleep; but I sleep not; all night long I lie
Tossing and wakeful, and I come to thee.
For so did King Afrasiab¹³⁰ bid me seek
Thy counsel, and to heed thee as thy son,
In Samarcand,¹³¹ before the army march'd;
And I will tell thee what my heart desires.
Thou know'st if, since from Ader-baijan¹³² first
I came among the Tartars, and bore arms,
I have still served Afrasiab well, and shown,
At my boy's years,¹³³ the courage of a man.
This, too, thou know'st, that while I still bear on
The conquering Tartar ensigns through the world,
And beat the Persians back on every field,
I seek one man, one man, and one alone —
Rustum,¹³⁴ my father; who I hoped should greet,

Should one day greet, upon some well-fought field,
His not unworthy, not inglorious son.
So I long hoped, but him I never find.
Come then, hear now, and grant me what I ask.
Let the two armies rest to-day; but I
Will challenge forth the bravest Persian lords
To meet me, man to man: if I prevail,
Rustum will surely hear it; if I fall —
Old man, the dead need no one, claim no kin.
Dim is the rumour of a common fight,
Where host meets host, and many names are sunk;
But of a single combat fame speaks clear.”

He spoke; and Peran-Wisa took the hand
Of the young man in his, and sigh'd, and said:—

“O Sohrab, an unquiet heart is thine!
Canst thou not rest among the Tartar chiefs,
And share the battle's common chance with us
Who love thee, but must press forever first,
In single fight incurring single risk,
To find a father thou has never seen?
That were far best, my son, to stay with us
Unmurmuring; in our tents, while it is war,
And when 't is truce, then in Afrasiab's towns.
But, if this one desire indeed rules all,
To seek out Rustum — seek him not through fight!
Seek him in peace, and carry to his arms,
O Sohrab, carry an unwounded son!
But far hence seek him, for he is not here.
For now it is not as when I was young,

When Rustum was in front of every fray;
But now he keeps apart, and sits at home,
In Seistan,¹³⁵ with Zal,¹³⁶ his father old.
Whether that his own mighty strength at last
Feels the abhorr'd approaches of old age,
Or in some quarrel with the Persian King.
There go!—Thou wilt not? Yet my heart forebodes
Danger or death awaits thee on this field.
Fain would I know thee safe and well, though lost
To us; fain therefore send thee hence, in peace
To seek thy father, not seek single fights
In vain;—but who can keep the lion's cub
From ravening, and who govern Rustum's son?
Go, I will grant thee what thy heart desires."

So said he, and dropp'd Sohrab's hand, and left
His bed, and the warm rugs whereon he lay;
And o'er his chilly limbs his woollen coat¹³⁷
He pass'd, and tied his sandals on his feet,
And threw a white cloak¹³⁸ round him, and he took
In his right hand a ruler's staff, no sword;
And on his head he placed his sheep-skin cap,
Black, glossy, curl'd, the fleece of Kara-Kul;¹³⁹
And raised the curtain of his tent, and call'd
His herald to his side, and went abroad.

The sun by this had risen, and cleared the fog
From the broad Oxus¹⁴⁰ and the glittering sands.
And from their tents the Tartar horsemen filed
Into the open plain; so Haman¹⁴⁰ bade;—
Haman, who next to Peran-Wisa ruled

The host, and still was in his lusty prime.
From their black tents, long files of horse, they
stream'd ;

As when some grey November morn the files,
In marching order spread, of long-neck'd cranes
Stream over Casbin¹⁴¹ and the southern slopes
Of Elburz,¹⁴² from the Aralian estuaries,¹⁴³
Or some frore¹⁴⁴ Caspian reed-bed,¹⁴⁵ southward bound
For the warm Persian sea-board — so they stream'd.
The Tartars¹⁴⁶ of the Oxus,¹⁴⁷ the King's guard,
First, with black sheep-skin caps and with long
spears;

Large men, large steeds;¹⁴⁸ who from Bokhara¹⁴⁹ come
And Khiva,¹⁵⁰ and ferment the milk of mares.¹⁵¹
Next the more temperate Toorkmuns¹⁵² of the south,
The Tukas,¹⁵³ and the lances of Salore,¹⁵⁴
And those from Attruck¹⁵⁵ and the Caspian sands;¹⁵⁵
Light men and on light steeds,¹⁵⁶ who only drink
The acrid milk of camels,¹⁵¹ and their wells.
And then a swarm of wandering horse,¹⁵⁷ who came
From far, and a more doubtful service own'd;
The Tartars of Ferghana,¹⁵⁸ from the banks
Of the Jaxartes,¹⁵⁹ men with scanty beards
And close-set skull-caps;¹⁶⁰ and those wilder hordes
Who roam o'er Kipchak¹⁶¹ and the northern waste,
Kalmucks¹⁶² and unkempt Kuzzaks,¹⁶³ tribes who stray
Nearest the Pole,¹⁶¹ and wandering Kirghizzes,¹⁶⁵
Who come on shaggy ponies¹⁶⁶ from Pamere.¹⁶⁷
These all filed out from camp into the plain.

And on the other side the Persians form'd;—
First a light cloud of horse, Tartars they seem'd,
The Ilyats¹⁶⁸ of Khorassan; ¹⁶ and behind,
The royal troops of Persia, horse and foot,
Marshall'd battalions bright in burnish'd steel.¹⁶⁹
But Peran-Wisa with his herald came,
Threading the Tartar squadrons to the front,
And with his staff kept back the foremost ranks.
And when Ferood,¹⁷⁰ who led the Persians, saw
That Peran-Wisa kept the Tartars back,
He took his spear, and to the front he came,
And check'd his ranks, and fix'd them where they
stood.

And the old Tartar came upon the sand
Betwixt the silent hosts, and spake, and said:—
“ Ferood, and ye, Persians and Tartars, hear!
Let there be truce between the hosts to-day.
But choose a champion from the Perisian lords
To fight our champion Sohrab, man to man.”

As, in the country, on a morn in June,
When the dew glistens on the pearléd ears,
A shiver runs through the deep corn for joy —
So, when they heard what Peran-Wisa said,
A thrill through all the Tartar squadrons ran
Of pride and hope for Sohrab, whom they loved.

But as a troop of pedlars, from Cabool,¹⁷¹
Cross underneath the Indian Caucasus,¹⁷²
That vast sky-neighboring mountain of milk snow;
Crossing so high, that, as they mount, they pass

Long flocks of travelling birds dead on the snow,
Choked by the air,¹⁷³ and scarce can they themselves
Slake their parch'd throats with sugar'd mulber-
ries —¹⁷⁴

In single file they move, and stop their breath,
For fear they should dislodge the o'erhanging
snows —¹⁷⁵

So the pale Persians held their breath with fear.

And to Ferood his brother chiefs came up
To counsel; Gudurz¹⁷⁶ and Zoarrah¹⁷⁷ came,
And Feraburz,¹⁷⁸ who ruled the Persian host
Second, and was the uncle of the King;
These came and counsell'd, and then Gudurz said:

“Ferood, shame bids us take their challenge up,
Yet champion have we none to match this youth.
He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart.
But Rustum came last night; aloof he sits,
And sullen, and has pitch'd his tents apart:
Him will I seek, and carry to his ear
The Tartar challenge, and this young man's name.
Haply he will forget his wrath, and fight.
Stand forth the while, and take their challenge up.”

So spake he; and Ferood stood forth and cried:—
“Old man, be it agreed as thou hast said!
Let Sohrab arm, and we will find a man.”

He spoke; and Peran-Wisa turn'd, and strode
Back through the opening squadrons to his tent.
But through the anxious Persians Gudurz ran,
And cross'd the camp which lay behind, and reach'd,

Out on the sands beyond it, Rustum's tents.
Of scarlet cloth¹⁷⁹ they were, and glittering gay,
Just pitch'd; the high pavilion in the midst
Was Rustum's, and his men lay camp'd around.
And Gudurz enter'd Rustum's tent, and found
Rustum; his morning meal was done, but still
The table stood before him, charged with food—
A side of roasted sheep,¹⁸⁰ and cakes of bread,
And dark green melons; and there Rustum sate
Listless, and held a falcon on his wrist,¹⁸¹
And play'd with it; but Gudurz came and stood
Before him; and he look'd, and saw him stand,
And with a cry sprang up and dropp'd the bird,
And greeted Gudurz with both hands, and said:—
“Welcome! These eyes could see no better sight.
What news? but sit down first, and eat and drink.”

But Gudurz stood in the tent door, and said:—
“Not now! a time will come to eat and drink,
But not to-day; to-day has other needs.
The armies are drawn out, and stand at gaze;
For from the Tartars is a challenge brought
To pick a champion from the Persian lords
To fight their champion—and thou know'st his
name —

Sohrab men call him, but his birth is hid.
O Rustum, like thy might is this young man's!
He has the wild stag's foot, the lion's heart;
And he is young, and Iran's chiefs are old,
Or else too weak; and all eyes turn to thee.

“Come down and help us, Rustum, or we lose!”

He spoke; but Rustum answer'd with a smile:—

“Go to! if Iran's chiefs are old, then I
Am older;¹⁸² if the young are weak, the King
Errs strangely; for the King, for Kai Khosroo,
Himself is young, and honors younger men,
And lets the aged moulder to their graves.
Rustum he loves no more,¹⁸³ but loves the young—
The young may rise at Sohrab's vaunts, not I.
For what care I, though all speak Sohrab's fame?
For would that I myself had such a son,
And not that one slight helpless girl I have—
A son so famed, so brave, to send to war,
And I to tarry with the snow-hair'd Zal,
My father, whom the robber Afghans¹⁸⁴ vex,
And clip his borders short, and drive his herds,
And he has none to guard his weak old age.
There would I go, and hang my armour up,
And with my great name fence that weak old man,
And spend the goodly treasure I have got,
And rest my age, and hear of Sohrab's fame,
And leave to death the hosts of thankless kings,
And with these slaughterous hands draw sword no
more.”

He spoke, and smiled; and Gudurz made reply:—

“What then, O Rustum, will men say to thee this,
When Sohrab dares our bravest forth, and seeks
Thee most of all, and thou, whom most he seeks,

Hidest thy face? Take heed, lest men should say:
Like some old miser, Rustum hoards his fame
And shuns to peril it with younger men."

And, greatly moved, then Rustum made reply :
"O Gudurz, wherefore dost thou say such words?
Thou knowest better words than this to say.
What is one more, one less, obscure or famed,
Valiant or craven, young or old, to me?
Are not they mortal, am not I myself?
But who for men of naught would do great deeds?
Come, thou shalt see how Rustum hoards his fame !
But I will fight unknown, and in plain arms ;
Let not men say of Rustum, he was match'd
In single fight with any mortal man."

He spoke, and frown'd ; and Gudurz turn'd, and
ran

Back quickly through the camp in fear and joy —
Fear at his wrath, but joy that Rustum came.
But Rustum strode to his tent-door, and call'd
His followers in, and bade them bring his arms,
And clad himself in steel;¹⁸⁵ the arms he chose
Were plain,¹⁸⁶ and on his shield was no device,
Only his helm was rich, inlaid with gold,¹⁸⁷
And, from the fluted spine atop,¹⁸⁸ a plume
Of horsehair waved, a scarlet horsehair plume.
So arm'd he issued forth ; and Ruksh, his horse,¹⁸⁹
Follow'd him like a faithful hound at heel —
Ruksh, whose renown was noised through all the
earth,

The horse, whom Rustum on a foray once
Did in Bokhara by the river find
A colt beneath its dam, and drove him home,
And rear'd him ; a bright bay, with lofty crest,
Dight¹⁹⁰ with a saddle-bow of broider'd green
Crusted with gold, and on the ground were work'd
All beasts of chase, all beasts that hunters know.
So follow'd, Rustum left his tents, and cross'd
The camp, and to the Persian host appear'd;
And all the Persians knew him, and with shouts
Hail'd; but the Tartars knew not who he was.
And dear as the wet diver to the eyes
Of his pale wife who waits and weeps on shore,
By sandy Bahrein,¹⁹¹ in the Persian Gulf,
Plunging all day in the blue waves, at night,
Having made up his tale of precious pearls,
Rejoins her in their hut upon the sands —
So dear to the pale Persians Rustum came.

And Rustum to the Persian front advanced,
And Sohrab arm'd in Haman's tent and came.
And as afield the reapers cut a swath
Down through the middle of a rich man's corn,¹⁹²
And on each side are squares of standing corn,
And in the midst a stubble, short and bare —
So on each side were squares of men, with spears
Bristling, and in the midst, the open sand.
And Rustum came upon the sand, and cast
His eyes toward the Tartar tents, and saw
Sohrab come forth, and eyed him as he came.

As some rich woman, on a winter's morn,
Eyes through her silken curtains the poor drudge¹⁹³
Who with numb, blacken'd fingers makes her fire —
At cock-crow, on a star-lit winter's morn,
When the frost flowers the whiten'd window-panes —
And wonders how she lives, and what the thoughts
Of that poor drudge may be; so Rustum eyed
The unknown adventurous Youth, who from afar
Came seeking Rustum, and defying forth
All the most valiant chiefs; long he perused
His spirited air, and wonder'd who he was.
For very young he seem'd, tenderly rear'd;
Like some young cypress, tall, and dark, and straight,
Which in a queen's secluded garden throws
Its slight dark shadow on the moon-lit turf,
By midnight, to a bubbling fountain's sound —
So slender¹⁹⁴ Sohrab seem'd, so softly rear'd.
And a deep pity enter'd Rustum's soul —
As he beheld him coming; and he stood,
And beckon'd to him with his hand, and said:—

“O thou young man, the air of Heaven is soft,
And warm, and pleasant; but the grave is cold!
Heaven's air is better than the cold dead grave.
Behold me! I am vast, and clad in iron,
And tried; and I have stood on many a field
Of blood, and I have fought with many a foe —
Never was that field lost, or that foe saved.
O Sohrab, wherefore wilt thou rush on death?
Be govern'd! quit the Tartar host, and come

To Iran, and be as my son to me,
And fight beneath my banner till I die!
There are no youths in Iran brave as thou."

So he spake, mildly; Sohrab heard his voice,
The mighty voice of Rustum; and he saw
His giant figure planted on the sand,
Sole, like some single tower, which a chief
Hath builded on the waste¹⁹⁵ in former years
Against the robbers, and he saw that head,
Streaked with its first grey hairs ;—hope fill'd his soul,
And he ran forward and embraced his knees,
And clasp'd his hand within his own, and said:—

"Oh, by thy father's head! by thine own soul!
Art thou not Rustum? Speak! art thou not he?"

But Rustum eyed askance the kneeling youth,
And turn'd away, and spoke to his own soul:—

"Ah me, I muse what this young fox may mean!
False, wily, boastful, are these Tartar boys,
For if I now confess this thing he asks,
And hide it not, but say: *Rustum is here!*
He will not yield indeed, nor quit our foes,
But he will find some pretext not to fight,
And praise my fame, and proffer courteous gifts,
A belt or sword perhaps, and go his way.
And on a feast-tide, in Afrasiab's hall,
In Samarcand, he will arise and cry:

'I challenged once, when the two armies camp'd
Beside the Oxus, all the Persian lords
To cope with me in single fight; but they

Shrank, only Rustum dared; then he and I
Changed gifts, and went on equal terms away.’
So will he speak, perhaps, while men applaud,
Then were the chiefs of Iran sham’d through me.”

And then he turn’d, and sternly spake aloud:—
“Rise ! wherefore dost thou vainly question thus
Of Rustum? I am here, whom thou hast call’d
By challenge forth; make good thy vaunts, or yield !
Is it with Rustum only thou wouldst fight?
Rash boy, men look on Rustum’s face and flee !
For well I know, that did great Rustum stand
Before thy face this day, and were reveal’d,
There would be then no talk of fighting more.
But being what I am, I tell thee this —
Do thou record it in thy inmost soul:
Either thou shalt renounce thy vaunt and yield,
Or else thy bones shall strew this sand, till winds
Bleach them, or Oxus with his summer-floods,¹⁹⁶
Oxus in summer wash them all away,”

He spoke; and Sohrab answer’d, on his feet:—
“Art thou so fierce? Thou will not fright me so!
I am no girl, to be made pale by words.
Yet this thou hast said well, did Rustum stand
Here on this field, there were no fighting then.
But Rustum is far hence, and we stand here.
Begin ! thou art more vast, more dread than I,
And thou art proved, I know, and I am young —
But yet success sways with the breath of Heaven,
And though thou thinkest that thou knowest sure

Thy victory, yet thou canst not surely know.
For we are all, like swimmers in the sea,
Pois'd on the top of a huge wave of fate,
Which hangs uncertain to which side to fall.
And whether it will heave us up to land,
Or whether it will roll us out to sea,
Back out to sea, to the deep waves of death,
We know not, and no search will make us know;
Only the event will teach us in its hour."

He spoke; and Rustum answer'd not, but hurl'd
His spear¹⁹⁷; down from his shoulder, down it came,
As on some partridge in the corn a hawk,
That long has tower'd in the airy clouds,
Drops like a plummet; Sohrab saw it come,
And sprang aside, quick as a flash; the spear
Hiss'd, and went quivering down into the sand,
Which it sent flying wide;—then Sohrab threw
In turn, and full struck Rustum's shield;¹⁹⁸ sharp rang
The iron plates, rang sharp, but turn'd the spear.
And Rustum seized his club, which none but he
Could wield; an unlopp'd trunk it was, and huge,
Still rough—like those which men in treeless plains
To build them boats fish from the flooded rivers,
Hyphasis or Hydaspes,¹⁹⁹ when, high up
By their dark springs, the wind in winter-time
Has made in Himalayan²⁰⁰ forests wrack,²⁰¹
And strewn the channels with torn boughs—so huge
The club which Rustum lifted now, and struck
One stroke; but again Sohrab sprang aside,

Lithe as the glancing snake, and the club came
Thundering to earth, and leapt from Rustum's hand.
And Rustum follow'd his own blow, and fell
To his knees, and with his fingers clutch'd the sand;
And now might Sohrab have unsheathed his sword,
And pierced the mighty Rustum while he lay
Dizzy, and on his knees, and choked with sand;
But he look'd on, and smiled, nor bared his sword,
But courteously drew back, and spoke, and said:—

“Thou strik'st too hard! that club of thine will
float

Upon the summer-floods, and not my bones.
But rise, and be not wroth! not wroth am I;
No, when I see thee, wrath forsakes my soul.
Thou say'st, thou art not Rustum; be it so!
Who art thou, then, that canst so touch my soul?
Boy as I am, I have seen battles too —
Have waded foremost in their bloody waves,
And heard their hollow roar of dying men;
But never was my heart thus touch'd before.
Are they from Heaven, these softenings of the heart?
O, thou old warrior, let us yield to Heaven!
Come, plant we here in earth our angry spears,
And make a truce, and sit upon this sand,
And pledge each other in red wine, like friends,
And thou shalt talk to me of Rustum's deeds.
There are enough foes in the Persian host,
Whom I may meet, and strike, and feel no pang;
Champions enough Afrasiab has, whom thou

May'st fight; fight *them*, when they confront thy
spear!

But oh, let there be peace 'twixt thee and me!"

He ceased, but while he spake, Rustum had risen,
And stood erect, trembling with rage; his club
He left to lie, but had regain'd his spear,
Whose fiery point now in his mail'd right-hand
Blazed bright and baleful, like that autumn-star,
The baleful sign of fevers;²⁰² dust had soil'd
His stately crest, and dimm'd his glittering arms.
His breast heaved, his lips foam'd, and twice his
voice

Was choked with rage; at last these words broke
way:—

"Girl! nimble with thy feet, not with thy hands!
Curl'd minion, dancer, coiner of sweet words!
Fight, let me hear thy hateful voice no more!
Thou art not in Afrasiab's gardens now
With Tartar girls, with whom thou art wont to dance;
But on the Oxus-sands, and in the dance
Of battle, and with me, who make no play
Of war; I fight it out, and hand to hand.
Speak not to me of truce, and pledge, and wine!
Remember all thy valor; try thy feints
And cunning! all the pity I had is gone;
Because thou hast shamed me before both the hosts
With thy light skipping tricks, and thy girl's wiles."

He spoke, and Sohrab kindled at his taunts,
And he too drew his sword; at once they rush'd

Together, as two eagles on one prey²⁰³
Come rushing down together from the clouds,
One from the east, one from the west; their shields
Dash'd with a clang together, and a din
Rose, such as that the sinewy woodcutters
Make often in the forest's heart at morn,
Of hewing axes, crashing tree — such blows
Rustum and Sohrab on each other hail'd.
And you would say that sun and stars took part
In that unnatural conflict; for a cloud
Grew suddenly in heaven, and dark'd the sun
Over the fighters' heads; and a wind rose
Under their feet, and moaning swept the plain,
And a sandy whirlpool wrapp'd the pair.
In gloom they twain were wrapp'd, and they alone;
For both the on-looking hosts on either hand
Stood in broad daylight, and the sky was pure,
And the sun sparkled on the Oxus stream.
But in the gloom they fought, with blood-shot eyes
And labouring breath; first Rustum struck the shield
Which Sohrab held stiff out; the steel-spiked spear
Rent the tough plates, but fail'd to reach the skin,
And Rustum pluck'd it back with angry groan.
Then Sohrab with his sword smote Rustum's helm,
Nor clove its steel quite through; but all the crest
He shore away, and that proud horsehair plume,
Never till then defiled, sank to the dust;
And Rustum bow'd his head; but then the gloom
Grew blacker; thunder rumbled in the air,

And lightnings rent the cloud; and Ruksh, the horse,
Who stood at hand, utter'd a dreadful cry; —
No horse's cry was that, most like the roar
Of some pain'd desert-lion, who all day
Has trail'd the hunter's javelin in his side,
And comes at night to die upon the sand —
The two hosts heard that cry, and quaked for fear,
And Oxus curdled as it cross'd his stream.
But Sohrab heard, and quail'd not, but rush'd on,
And struck again; and again Rustum bow'd
His head; but this time all the blade, like glass,
Sprang in a thousand shivers on the helm,
And in the hand the hilt remain'd alone.
Then Rustum raised his head; his dreadful eyes
Glared, and he shook on high his menacing spear,
And shouted: *Rustum!* — Sohrab heard that shout,
And shrank amazed: back he recoil'd one step,
And scann'd with blinking eyes the advancing form;
And then he stood bewilder'd; and he dropp'd
His covering shield, and the spear pierced his side.
He reel'd, and staggering back, sank to the ground;
And then the gloom dispersed, and the wind fell,
And the bright sun broke forth, and melted all
The cloud; and the two armies saw the pair —
Saw Rustum standing, safe upon his feet,
And Sohrab, wounded, on the bloody sand.

Then, with a bitter smile, Rustum began: —
‘Sohrab, thou thoughtest in thy mind to kill
A Persian lord this day, and strip his corpse,

And bear thy trophies to Afrasiab's tent.
Or else that the great Rustum would come down
Himself to fight, and that thy wiles would move
His heart to take a gift, and let thee go.
And then that all the Tartar host would praise
Thy courage or thy craft, and spread thy fame,
To glad thy father in his weak old age.
Fool, thou art slain, and by an unknown man !
Dearer to the red jackals shalt thou be
Than to thy friends, and to thy father old."

And, with a fearless mien, Sohrab replied:—
"Unknown thou art; yet thy fierce vaunt is vain.
Thou dost not slay me, proud and boastful man!
No! Rustum slays me, and this filial heart.
For were I match'd with ten such men as thee,
And I were that which till to-day I was,
They should be lying here, I standing there.
But that belovéd name unnerved my arm —
That name, and something, I confess, in thee,
Which troubles all my heart, and made my shield
Fall; and thy spear transfix'd an unarm'd foe.
And now thou boastest, and insult'st my fate,
But hear thou this, fierce man, tremble to hear:
The mighty Rustum shall avenge my death !
My father, whom I seek through all the world,
He shall avenge my death, and punish thee !"

As when some hunter in the spring hath found
A breeding eagle²⁰⁴ sitting on her nest,
Upon the craggy isle of a hill-lake,

And pierced her with an arrow as she rose,
And followed her to find her where she fell
Far off; anon her mate comes winging back
From hunting, and a great way off describes
His huddling young left sole; at that, he checks
His pinion, and with short, uneasy sweeps
Circles above his eyry, with loud screams
Chiding his mate back to her nest; but she
Lies dying, with the arrow in her side,
In some far stony gorge out of his ken,
A heap of fluttering feathers — never more
Shall the lake glass her, flying over it;
Never the black and dripping precipices
Echo her stormy scream as she sails by—
As that poor bird flies home, nor knows his loss,
So Rustum knew not his own loss, but stood
Over his dying son, and knew him not.

But, with a cold, incredulous voice, he said:—
“What prate is this of fathers and revenge?
The mighty Rustum never had a son.”

And, with a failing voice, Sohrab replied:—
“Ah yes, he had! and that lost son am I.
Surely the news will one day reach his ear,
Reach Rustum, where he sits, and tarries long,
Somewhere, I know not where, but far from here;
And pierce him like a stab, and make him leap
To arms, and cry for vengeance upon thee,
Fierce man, bethink thee, for an only son!
What will that grief, what will that vengeance be?

Oh, could I live, till I that grief had seen!
Yet him I pity not so much, but her,
My mother, who in Ader-baijan dwells
With that old king, her father, who grows grey
With age, and rules over the valiant Koords.²⁰⁵
Her most I pity, who no more will see
Sohrab returning from the Tartar camp,
With spoils and honour, when the war is done,
But a dark rumour will be bruited up,
From tribe to tribe, until it reach her ear;
And then will that defenseless woman learn
That Sohrab will rejoice her sight no more,
But that in battle with a nameless foe,
By the far-distant Oxus, he is slain."

He spoke; and as he ceased, he wept aloud,
Thinking of her he left, and his own death.

He spoke; but Rustum listen'd, plunged in
thought.

Nor did he yet believe it was his son
Who spoke, although he call'd back names he knew;
For he had had sure tidings that the babe,
Which was in Ader-baijan¹³² born to him,
Had been a puny girl, no boy at all —
So that sad mother sent him word, for fear
Rustum should seek the boy, to train in arms.
And so he deem'd that either Sohrab took,
By a false boast, the name of Rustum's son;
Or that men gave it him, to swell his fame.
So deem'd he; yet he listen'd, plunged in thought;

And his soul set to grief, as the vast tide
Of the bright rocking Ocean sets to shore
At the full moon; tears gather'd in his eyes;
For he remember'd his own early youth,
And all its bounding rapture; as, at dawn,
The shepherd from his mountain-lodge descries
A far, bright city, smitten by the sun,
Through many rolling clouds — so Rustum saw
His youth; saw Sohrab's mother, in her bloom;
And that old king, her father, who loved so well
His wandering guest, and gave him his fair child
With joy; and all the pleasant life they led,
They three, in that long-distant summer-time —
The castle, and the dewy woods, and hunt
And hound, and morn on those delightful hills
In Ader-baijan. And he saw that Youth,
Of age and looks to be his own dear son,
Piteous and lovely, lying on the sand,
Like some rich hyacinth²⁰⁶ which by the scythe
Of an unskilful gardener has been cut,
Mowing the garden grass-plots near its bed,
And lies, a fragrant tower of purple bloom,
On the mown, dying grass — so Sohrab lay,
Lovely in death, upon the common sand.
And Rustum gazed on him with grief, and said:—

“O Sohrab, thou indeed art such a son
Whom Rustum, wert thou his, might well have loved!
Yet here thou errest, Sohrab, or else men
Have told thee false—thou art not Rustum's son.

For Rustum had no son; one child he had —
But one — a girl; who with her mother now
Plies some light female task, nor dreams of us —
Of us she dreams not, nor of wounds, nor war.”

But Sohrab answered him in wrath; for now
The anguish of the deep-fix'd spear grew fierce,
And he desired to draw forth the steel,
And let the blood flow free, and so to die —
But first he would convince his stubborn foe;
And, rising sternly on one arm, he said:—

“Man, who art thou who dost deny my words?
Truth sits upon the lips of dying men,
And falsehood, while I lived, was far from mine.
I tell thee, prick'd upon this arm I bear
That seal which Rustum to my mother gave,
That she might prick it on the babe she bore.”

He spoke; and all the blood left Rustum's cheeks;
And his knees totter'd, and he smote his hand
Against his breast, his heavy mailed hand,
That the hard iron corselet²⁰⁷ clank'd aloud,
And to his heart he press'd the other hand,
And in a hollow voice he spake, and said:—

“Sohrab, that were a proof which could not lie!
If thou show this, then art thou Rustum's son.”

Then, with weak hasty fingers, Sohrab loosed
His belt, and near the shoulder bared his arm,
And showed a sign in faint vermilion points
Prick'd; as a cunning workman, in Pekin,
Pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain²⁰⁸ vase,

An emperor's gift — at early morn he paints,
And all day long, and, when night comes, the lamp
Lights up his studious forehead and thin hands —
So delicately prick'd the sign appear'd
On Sohrab's arm, the sign of Rustum's seal.
It was that griffin,²⁰⁹ which of old rear'd Zal,
Rustum's great father, whom they left to die,
A helpless babe, among the mountain-rocks;
Him that kind creature found, and rear'd, and loved —
Then Rustum took it for his glorious sign.
And Sohrab bared that image on his arm,
And himself scann'd it long with mournful eyes,
And then he touch'd it with his hand and said:—

“How say'st thou? Is that sign the proper sign
Of Rustum's son, or of some other man's?”

He spoke; but Rustum gazed, and gazed, and stood
Speechless; and then he utter'd one sharp cry:

“*O boy — thy father!*”—and his voice choked there.

And then a dark cloud pass'd before his eyes,
And his head swam, and he sank down to earth.

But Sohrab crawl'd to where he lay, and cast
His arms about his neck, and kiss'd his lips,
And with fond, faltering fingers stroked his cheeks,
Trying to call him back to life; and life
Came back to Rustum, and he oped his eyes,
And they stood wide with horror; and he seized
In both his hands the dust which lay around,
And threw it on his head, and smirch'd his hair,—
His hair, and face, and beard, and glittering arms;

And strong convulsive groanings shook his breast,
And his sobs choked him; and he clutch'd his sword,
To draw it, and forever let life out.

But Sohrab saw his thought, and held his hands,
And with a soothing voice he spoke, and said:—

“Father, forbear! for I but meet to-day
The doom which at my birth was written down
In Heaven, and thou art Heaven's unconscious hand.
Surely my heart cried out that it was thou,
When first I saw thee; and thy heart spoke too,
I know it! but fate trod those promptings down
Under its iron heel; fate, fate engaged
The strife, and hurl'd me on my father's spear.
But let us speak no more of this! I find
My father; let me feel that I have found!
Come, sit beside me on this sand, and take
My head betwixt thy hands, and kiss my cheeks,
And wash them with thy tears, and say: *My son!*
Quick! quick! for number'd are my sands of life,
And swift; for like the lightning to this field
I came, and like the wind I go away—
Sudden, and swift, and like a passing wind;
But it was writ in Heaven that this should be.”

So said he, and his voice released the heart
Of Rustum, and his tears broke forth; he cast
His arms round his son's neck, and wept aloud,
And kiss'd him. And awe fell on both the hosts,
When they saw Rustum's grief; and Ruksh, the horse,
With his head bowing to the ground and mane

Sweeping the dust, came near, and in mute woe
First to the one then to the other moved
His head, as if enquiring what their grief
Might mean; and from his dark, compassionate eyes,
The big warm tears roll'd down, and caked the sand.
But Rustum chid him with stern voice, and said:—

“Ruksh, now thou grieveest; but, O Ruksh, thy
feet

Should first have rotted on their nimble joints,
Or ere they brought thy master to this field!”

But Sohrab look'd upon the horse and said:—

“Is this then, Ruksh? How often, in past days,
My mother told me of thee, thou brave steed,
My terrible father's terrible horse! and said,
That I should one day find thy lord and thee.
Come, let me lay my hand upon thy mane!
O Ruksh, thou art more fortunate than I;
For thou hast gone where I shall never go,
And snuff'd the breezes of my father's home.
And thou hast trod the sands of Seistan,
And seen the River of Helmund,²¹⁰ and the Lake
Of Zirrah;²¹¹ and the aged Zal himself
Has often stroked thy neck, and given thee food,
Corn in a golden platter soak'd with wine,
And said: *O Ruksh! bear Rustum well!*— but I
Have never known my grandsire's furrow'd face,
Nor seen his lofty house in Seistan,
Nor slaked my thirst at the clear Helmund stream;
But lodged among my father's foes, and seen

Afrasiab's cities only, Samarcand,¹³¹
Bokhara,¹⁴⁹ and lone Khiva¹⁵⁰ in the waste,
And the black Toorkmun tents;¹²⁸ and only drunk
The desert rivers, Moorghab and Tejend,²¹²
Kohik,²¹³ and where the Kalmuks²¹⁴ feed their sheep,
The northern Sir;¹⁵⁹ and this great Oxus stream,
The yellow Oxus,²¹⁵ by whose brink I die.”
And, with a heavy groan, Rustum bewail'd:—
 “ Oh, that its waves were flowing over me!
Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt²¹⁶
Roll tumbling in the current o'er my head!”
But with a grave, mild voice, Sohrab replied:—
 “ Desire not that, my father! thou must live.
For some are born to do great deeds, and live,
As some are born to be obscured, and die.
Do thou the deeds I die too young to do,
And reap a second glory in thine age;
Thou art my father, and thy gain is mine.
But come! thou seest this great host of men
Which follow me; I pray thee slay not these!
Let me entreat for them; what have they done?
They follow'd me, my hope, my fame, my star.
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace,
But me thou must bear hence, not send with them,
But carry me with thee to Seistan,
And place me on a bed, and mourn for me,
Thou, and the snow-haired Zal, and all thy friends.
And thou must lay me in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound above my bones,

And plant a far-seen pillar over all,
That so the passing horsemen on the waste
May see my tomb a great way off, and cry:
Sohrab, the mighty Rustum's son, lies there,
Whom his great father did in ignorance kill!
And I be not forgotten in my grave.'

And, with a mournful voice, Rustum replied:—
“Fear not! as thou hast said, Sohrab, my son,
So shall it be; for I will burn my tents,
And quit the host, and bear thee hence with me,
And carry thee away to Seistan,
And place thee on a bed, and mourn for thee,
With the snow-headed Zal, and all my friends.
And I will lay thee in that lovely earth,
And heap a stately mound²¹⁷ above thy bones,
And plant a far-seen pillar over all,
And men shall not forget thee in thy grave.
And I will spare thy host; yea, let them go!
Let them all cross the Oxus back in peace!
What should I do with slaying any more?
For would that all whom I have ever slain
Might be once more alive; my bitterest foes,
And they who were call'd champions in their time,
And through whose death I won that fame I have —
And I were nothing but a common man,
A poor, mean soldier, and without renown,
So thou mightest live, too, my son, my son!
Or rather would that I, even I myself,
Might now be lying on this bloody sand,

Near death, and by an ignorant stroke of thine,
Not thou of mine! and I might die, not thou;
And I, not thou, be borne to Seistan;
And Zal might weep above my grave, not thine;
And say: *O son, I weep thee not too sore,
For willingly, I know, thou met'st thine end!*
But now in blood and battles was my youth,
And full of blood and battles is my age;
And I shall never end this life of blood."

Then, at the point of death, Sohrab replied:—
"A life of blood indeed, thou dreadful man!
But thou shalt yet have peace; only not now;
Not yet! but thou shalt have it on that day,
When thou shalt sail in a high-masted ship,
Thou and the other peers of Kai Khosroo,
Returning home over the salt blue sea,²¹⁸
From laying thy dear master in his grave."

And Rustum gazed in Sohrab's face, and said:—
"Soon be that day, my son, and deep that sea!
Till then, if fate so wills, let me endure."

He spoke; and Sohrab smiled on him, and took
The spear, and drew it from his side, and eased
His wound's imperious anguish; but the blood
Came welling from the open gash, and life
Flow'd with the stream;—all down his cold white side
The crimson torrent ran, dim now and soil'd,
Like the soil'd tissue of white violets
Left, freshly gather'd, on their native bank,
By children whom their nurses call with haste

Indoors from the sun's eye; his head droop'd low,
His limbs grew slack; motionless, white, he lay—
White, with eyes closed; only when heavy gasps,
Deep heavy gasps quivering through all his frame,
Convulsed him back to life, he open'd them,
And fix'd them feebly on his father's face;
Till now all strength was ebb'd, and from his limbs
Unwillingly the spirit fled away,
Regretting the warm mansion which it left,
And youth, and bloom, and this delightful world.

So, on the bloody sand, Sohrab lay dead;
And the great Rustum drew his horseman's cloak
Down o'er his face, and sate by his dead son.
As those black granite pillars, once high-reared
By Jemshid in Persepolis,²¹⁹ to bear
His house, now 'mid their broken flights of steps
Lie prone, enormous, down the mountain side —
So in the sand lay Rustum by his son.

And night came down over the solemn waste,
And the two gazing hosts, and that sole pair,
And darken'd all; and a cold fog, with night,
Crept from the Oxus. Soon a hum arose,
As of a great assembly loosed, and fires
Began to twinkle through the fog; for now
Both armies moved to camp, and took their meal;
The Persians took it on the open sands
Southward, the Tartars by the river marge;
And Rustum and his son were left alone.

But the majestic river floated on,
Out of the mist and hum of that low land,
Into the frosty starlight, and there moved,
Rejoicing, through the hush'd Chorasman waste,²²⁰
Under the solitary moon; — he flow'd
Right for the polar star, past Orgunje,²²¹
Brimming, and bright, and large; then sands begin
To hem his watery march, and dam his streams,
And split his currents; that for many a league
The shorn and parcell'd Oxus²²² strains along
Through beds of sand and matted rushy isles —
Oxus, forgetting the bright speed he had
In his high mountain-cradle in Pamere,¹²⁷
A foil'd circuitous wanderer — till at last
The long'd-for dash of waves is heard, and wide
His luminous home of waters opens, bright
And tranquil, from whose floor the new-bathed stars
Emerge, and shine upon the Aral Sea.²²³

NOTES

1. Born at Laleham, in Middlesex, England, December 24, 1822; died at Liverpool, April 15, 1888.

2. Poems, second series, London, 1855. *Merope: A Tragedy*, London, 1858. *New Poems*, London, 1867. Poems, two volumes, London, 1869. Poems, three volumes: 1885. All the poems mentioned in this introduction are included in the Poetical works of Matthew Arnold, London and New York, The Macmillan Company, 1890.

3. See *Contemporary Review*, xxiv., 559.

4. A tragedy based upon a Greek legend recorded by Hyginus and Apollodorus. *Merope* was the widow of Cresphontes, king of Messenia, and was forced to marry his murderer, Polyphontes; but her then infant son Epytus, whom she brought up in secret, when he grew to maturity killed the usurper and reigned in his stead, after narrowly escaping death from his mother's hand through a misunderstanding.

5. *Essays in Criticism*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1883; essay on Maurice de Guérin, pp. 80, 110, 111.

6. A dramatic poem, the hero of which was the historical character Empedocles, a famous Sicilian philosopher, scientist, poet and statesman of the fifth century B.C., who was commonly believed to have ended his life by throwing himself into the burning crater of Mt. *Ætna*. Arnold represents him as destroying himself in one of the intervals of a despair and melancholy resulting from distrust in the popular religion and his own philosophy and an inability to solve the enigmas of existence.

7. *Edinburgh Review*, No. 168, p. 337 (October, 1888).

8. He held this chair at Oxford from 1857 to 1887. He had been made, in 1844, a fellow of Balliol College, as his father had been before him.

9. The Cornish prince Tristram of Lyonesse, according to the legends of King Arthur's court, was one of the three most valiant knights of the Round Table. He and Princess Iseult of Ireland, whom he was bringing across the sea to her plighted bridegroom, his uncle King Mare of Cornwall, in whose court he had been reared, drank by mistake a love-potion which her sister had given her to administer to her husband to insure a happy married life; and from this accident resulted an ill-starred affection, the troubles resulting from which only ended with the knight's death in his castle in Brittany, where he lived with his wife, the other Iseult, she of the Snow-White Hand, who was the mother of his children, but whom he could not love.

10. Balder, the son of Odin, the Father of Heaven, and Frigga, the Goddess of Love, was, according to the old Norse or Teutonic mythology, the best and fairest of the gods. His mother exacted an oath from all creatures not to injure him, but omitted the mistletoe on account of its weakness and apparent insignificance. But the wicked Loke put a

sprig of mistletoe in the hands of the blind Hoder, who, throwing it at Balder in sport, pierced him through and through so that he died. The gods tried again and again to persuade Hel, the goddess of the world of the shades, to set him free, but she consented to do so only on the condition that everything in the world should weep for him. Loke, in the disguise of a giantess, refused to weep, and therefore Balder must wait in the under-world until a distant age when a new heaven will replace the old Asgard in which the Norse divinities lived, and a new ideal of peace instead of war will dominate the universe.

11. See The Poetry of Matthew Arnold, by Vida D. Scudder, in Andover Review, September, 1887.

12. St. James Magazine, October, 1871.

13. Matthew Arnold as a Poet, in North American Review, June, 1888.

14. Henry G. Hewlett, Contemporary Review, 1874, xxiv, 550.

15. From the Persian word *firdaus*, a garden or paradise.

16. Khorassân is the northeastern part of modern Persia, corresponding roughly with the ancient Parthia.

17. A brilliant monarch who ruled over eastern Iran and northern India, with the title of sultân, which he was the first independent sovereign to assume. His father, Sabuktagin, was a Turkish slave, who rose to great popularity by his military exploits and became the ruler of Ghazna and the neighboring portions of Afghanistan after his marriage with the daughter of Alftagin. The latter was also a Turkish slave, who had been entrusted by a Sâmanid (see n. 26) prince with the government of Bokhara, but, after quarreling with his royal master, fled to the mountains of Ghazna, where he erected a little quasi-independent government of his own. It was in 999 that the Sultân Mahmûd deposed the last of the Sâmanids and took possession of Khorassân.

18. The chief place on the military road between Kabûl and Kandahar, in Afghanistan, within the limits of the ancient Zabulistân (see n. 81). It takes its name from the Ghuzzes, the Turkish tribe to which Sultân Mahmûd belonged, by whom it was founded.

19. See n. 120, end.

20. The last of the Sassanian kings. He came to the throne in 632, and died in 652.

21. Mazdeism, or religion of Ahura Mazda, so called from its supreme object of worship. It is often called Zoroastrianism after the great prophet, Zarathustra (improperly Zoroaster), to whom it owes its present shape (see n. 113), or Parseeism, which means "the religion of the Persians." In modern times it has three grades of ecclesiastics: the *dasturs*, the *mobeds* and the *herbads*, corresponding in some respects with the bishops, priests and deacons of the early Christianity.

22. The Dekhans were the great feudal nobles of Persia, and they preserved as a class the Mazdean faith long after the people at large had become Mohammedans. See nn. 60 (f) and 80.

23. This and other spoil was sent to the Abyssinian king as a mark of gratitude for the protection which he gave to the first followers of Mohammed while they were still very few in number and oppressed by the other Arabs. By the prophet's own advice a colony of them crossed to the Abyssinian side of the Red sea in 615, and a second colony in 616;

and the king of Abyssinia, though a Eutychian Christian, extended them a cordial hospitality until their return to Arabia, in 628, when brighter times had dawned.

24. The successors of the prophet Mohammed as the head of the religion of Islâm. After the caliphates of Omar, Othman and Ali, the Omeiad dynasty of Caliphs reigned at Damascus until 752, and in Spain till 1038. In the east they were succeeded by the Abbassides, who ruled at Bagdad till 1258, and in Egypt till 1577. In that year the last of the Abbassides made over the rights of his family to the caliphate to Selim I, Sultân of the Ottoman empire, and his successors have ever since claimed to be the Commanders of the Faithful.

25. The Pahlavi or Pehlevi, the official written language of the government and priesthood of Persia during the Sassanian period (n. 20, end). It was derived from the old Persian, known to us in the cuneiform or arrow-shaped inscriptions of Cyrus (n. 105) and his successors, and from it has sprung the new Persian, in which Firdausi wrote. The modern Persian is written with the Arabic alphabet, and the Pahlavi was written with that of the old Aramaic or Syriac, with which it had no affinities, but which had been the popular language of much of the western portion (Mesopotamia and Syria) of the second Iranian empire and was often employed in its official documents.

26. A dynasty which sprang up in the ninth century in the region around the upper Oxus (Transoxiana, see n. 149) and afterwards extended its sway over Khorassân and the whole of eastern Irân. Sâmân, its founder, was a Tartar chief, who claimed descent from the old Sassanian kings.

27. The country between modern Persia, India and Beluchistân. It was one of the earliest seats of Indo-Iranian civilization (see n. 36) and was the scene of the most heroic episodes of Persian tradition. It includes most of the land over which Rustam's family ruled (see nn. 81, 135) and some of its nobles claim to be descended from him and other heroes and kings whose exploits are recounted in the Shah Nâma. It separated from the Parthian Confederation (see n. 120, ¶ 4) as early as A.D. 58, and was afterwards, for several hundred years at least, subject to the powerful dynasty called by the Hindus the Turushka, to which the famous patron of Buddhism (Kanishka) belonged, which ruled over Kashmir and all northern India (see n. 119, ¶ 2).

28. See n. 135.

29. See notes 153 and 212.

30. The region between the Caspian and Aral seas and the Altai mountains, stretching along the northern frontier of Persia, Afghanistan and Tibet. It has been from time immemorial the abode of various nomadic and settled peoples, chiefly of the Turkî stock (see n. 42), whence its name. It corresponds to the Tûrân of Persian tradition, but much of it was occupied by Aryans in prehistoric times, and its southern portion at least has at intervals belonged to Irân within the historic period.

31. Equivalent to the ancient Gedrosia. It lies on the Arabian sea south of Afghanistan, and is separated from the basin of the Indus by the Hala mountains. It includes the southwestern part of the great plateau of Irân, and takes its present name from the Baluches, a people

speaking a language of Iranian origin which has formed the bulk of the population from time immemorial, though the royal power or Khanate is in the hands of the Brahûis, a people of Hindu origin who have had had the ascendancy since the seventeenth century.

32. Media Proper, or Great Media, included the present Persian provinces of Ardilan and Irak-Ajeni, lying chiefly between the mountain ranges that skirt the southern shores of the Caspian and the lower portion of the Tigris basin; and Little Media, or Atropene, which was equivalent to the present Azerbaijan or Persian Armenia.

33. See notes 123, 126, 222.

34. Bactria, or Bactriana, lies between the Oxus river and the Hindu Kush mountains, with the Pamir (see n. 127) to the east and the oasis of Merv to the west. It formed a part of the Persian empire as organized by Cyrus the Great, and after its fall became an independent kingdom subject to a Greek dynasty. The city of Balkh was its capital.

35. The branch of the Âryan people that crossed over the mountains from Bactria into the plains of the Sindhu (Indus) river were called by those who had remained behind the Hindus, or people of the Hindhu river (this being the Iranian pronunciation of the word Sindhu, as the Persians always changed *s* to *h*). They still retained that appellation after they had spread over the whole peninsula now called by Europeans by the Persian name of Hindustân ("land of the Hindus"); and the word is now commonly applied to any native inhabitant of that country, even though descended from the Mongoloid races (Dravidians and Kolarians) who occupied it before the Âryan conquest.

36. Or, more precisely, of people derived from the western and southern migrations of the Âryan peoples from central Asia. Whether the Âryan race as a whole (including Græco-Romans, Celts, Teutons, Slavs and Lithuanians) originated in Asia, as formerly held by all competent scholars, or in Europe, as many of the most eminent ethnologists now maintain, it is certain that the Âryan Bactrians, Medes, Persians and Hindus radiated from a point in the region of the Pamir mountains, while on the other hand such Âryan elements as enter into the mixed population of Armenia and Asia Minor are derived directly from European colonies. The ancestors of the European Âryans may have come from Central Asia or those of the Asiatic Âryans from northern Europe; it is still uncertain which alternative must be supposed.

37. Mongoloid, *i. e.*, resembling the Mongols. This term is now used to include not only all the Asiatic peoples related to the Turks and the Chinese, but also the Malays, the American Indians, and other races whose physical characteristics approach the same type.

38. The high grassy plains that cover a large part of Eastern Russia and Central and Southern Siberia.

39. A vast region north of China proper, south of Siberia, and west of Manchuria, which is now included in the Chinese empire, and has been inhabited from time immemorial by the typical Mongoloid peoples. It seems to have been the common center from which all the peoples of the Turanian race—Finns, Huns, Turkî, Manchus and Chinese, and their related tribes—have radiated.

40. The term Scyth or Scythian was applied by the Greeks to all the peoples that occupied the unknown region now constituting the Russian

empire in Europe and Asia, as well as those of Tibet and western Mongolia, so far as known to them. Those who were met with in southern Russia (Sarmatia) prior to the first century B.C., were probably the ancestors or congeners of the Slavs (Russians) and Goths (Germans), while those who inhabited the region around the Imaus (Pamir) mountains seem to have been chiefly of the Finnic and Turko-Mongol stocks. The Saeæ (n. 135) are usually confused with the Scythians, but represented one particular people, apparently of mixed Iranic and Turanian origin, who are the Sakas and Shâkyas of Hindu tradition, and the subjects of the Samidæ, the house to which Rustam belonged.

41. The Huns, a Mongolian tribe—the Hiong-nu of the Chinese annalists, the Hiün-yo of the Finns, and the Hunas of the Avesta, which at a very early period established a powerful kingdom south of the Altai mountains, whence they spread to the south and west. One of their colonies established itself, before the beginning of the Christian era, on the western shore of the Caspian sea, where it remained for several centuries. About 350 A.D. this branch of the Huns advanced to the sea of Azof, and in 374 they pressed on, overthrew the kingdom of the Ostrogoths (East Goths) and compelled the Visigoths (West Goths) just beyond them to make an irruption into the Roman empire. With the assistance of the tribes that they had subjugated on the way the Huns made themselves masters of the greater part of Europe, ravaged the Eastern empire, laid claim to half of the Western, and laid them both under tribute. Finally, under the leadership of their king, Attila, the son of Mundtaukh, they burst into Gaul, and in 451 gave the Burgundians a crushing defeat, which forms the climax of the Nibelungenlied (see n. 51), but were soon afterwards defeated by the Roman general, Ætius. Their last exploit was the devastation of northern Italy in the following year, where Attila (Etzel) died, and his people were dispersed and mingled with the surrounding populations. They had occupied the region around the Danube now called Hungary about the year 376, and for a long time made it their central seat.

42. The Turks, known to the Chinese historians as the Tu-kiu, were another branch of the Hiong-nu or Proto-Huns. They crossed the Thian-Shan mountains into Eastern Turkestan about 177 B.C., where they became subject to the Mongolian kingdom of the Juen Juen (Avars).

About A.D. 552 they obtained control of the country and conquered the land of the Haitals or White Huns to the westward, sharing their conquest with the Sassanian emperor Khrosrau I of Persia, between whose country and theirs, the Oxus then formed the boundary.

Their empire was still growing, especially to the westward, when it fell before the Arab conquerors from the southwest (706-714). Multitudes of them were then reduced into slavery and distributed throughout the Mohammedan world, but in many cases gained the upper hand of their masters. Thus arose several Turkish dynasties in Egypt and eastern Irân. Notable among the latter was that of the Ghaznavids, of which the Sultân Mahmûd, son of Sabuktigin, was the most illustrious representative. The tribe, from which the Ghaznavids were descended, was among the first to embrace as a whole the Mohammedan faith. This Ghuzz tribe, which traced its descent from the famous hero Oghuz,

had quarreled with the Uigurs (a tribe formerly tributary to the Tu-kiu, that had now established an independent kingdom at their expense) among whom they lived, and removed from the far east to the mouth of the Jaxartes, not far from the kingdom of Kharezm (see n. 150). In the early part of the 11th century, under the leadership of their king Israîl, the son of Seljuk, they crossed the Oxus and plundered the provinces of eastern Irân, and finally captured Merv and made it their capital.

The descendants of Seljuk carried their conquering arms throughout a large portion of western Asia and established four great kingdoms nominally subject to a common head: one at Hamadan, in Persia, one at Kerman, one at Damascus, and one at Iconium in Asia Minor. They overran Egypt (1170) and maintained perpetual war with the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem, the famous Saladin being one of their chiefs, though himself of Kurdish origin (see n. 205). Their dynasties in Irân were overthrown before the close of the 12th century (1194), and about 1255-65 the Seljuk empire in Asia Minor and Syria fell to pieces as a result of the invasion of the Mongols (see n. 44).

The Ottoman or Third Turkish empire takes its name from Othman (1218-1326), son of Er-Toghul, son of Suleyman Shah. Suleyman was the hereditary chief of a Turkish tribe in central Asia; and when the Mongol invasion began in the second decade of the 13th century he and his son led their people through eastern Persia and Armenia, and allied themselves with the Seljuk sultân of Rûm (Asia Minor), who, in return for their assistance against the marauders who formed the vanguard of the Mongol invasion, gave them in fief a little territory on the frontiers of the Byzantine empire, of which Er-Toghul became the emir, under the authority of the Seljuk sultan.

The Mongols did not retain possession of the territories in Asia Minor and Syria conquered by them, and when they had withdrawn no less than ten Turkish states sprang up out of the ruins of the Seljuk empire. That governed by Osman was one of the smallest, but he and his successors succeeded in gradually extending their authority over all the rest. The Turkish empire thus founded gradually extended itself over Asia Minor, Thrace, and Macedonia (Turkey in Europe); captured Constantinople, and brought an end to the Byzantine empire (1453); possessed itself of Greece (1448-60), lower Syria and Egypt (1516), the Barbary states (1518-75), and Cyprus (1571); gained a foothold in Italy (1480), and invaded Hungary (1444, 1526), and Austria (1529, 1683); but began to lose ground after the famous naval battle of Lepanto in 1571.

43. The Mongols, or inhabitants of Mongolia (see n. 39). The Huns, Turks and Tartars were offshoots of this people, but it only rose into prominence as a whole when it was united under the authority of Jenghis Khan. The tribe to which he belonged, the Ta-ta, lived in the 5th century of our era in the northeastern part of the Gobi desert, but migrated southward with others in the 9th century to escape the tyranny of the Tungus Kidâns. About that time a certain man by the name of Budantsar, is said to have made himself its chief. His descendants gradually extended their influence and power until, at the eighth generation, Yesukai, the father of Jenghis, found himself the ruler of a considerable territory and acknowledged as suzerain by many neighboring tribes. When Yesukai died in 1175 his son and heir was only thirteen years of age, and the

subject tribes revolted, but the chief's warlike widow Yulun took the field against the rebels and compelled most of them to acknowledge her son's authority. He showed himself worthy of such a mother, and after definitely conquering the Naimon, Markit and Karait (n. 162) tribes was in 1206 proclaimed king of the Mongols.

In a very short time the whole of Mongolia acknowledged his sway, and he then proceeded to the conquest of China (1215) and of Central Asia (1218-21).

44. The Mongol Empire, at the height of its glory, extended over Siberia, all China, all western Asia, and the whole of Russia.

Its advance in Europe was only checked by the battle of Wahlstatt, in Silesia, in 1241. In 1268 the Mongols wiped out forever the Abbasside Caliphate of Bagdad, which for centuries had retained only a shadow of its former power, either temporal or spiritual.

When Jenghis died (in 1227) he divided the empire among the families of his four sons, reserving the imperial dignity to the oldest surviving son, Oghotai. The empire soon became disintegrated, owing primarily to the dissensions between the families of Oghotai and Jagatai. One dynasty of Jenghis' descendants ruled in China (1215-1368), another over the Golden Horde in Kipchak (southern Russia), 1242-1480, and afterwards the Khanate of Astrakhan till 1554; another over the White Horde in Eastern Kipchak (southwestern Siberia), and another (the Jagatais) in central Asia, until 1572. The Turkish states in Asia Minor and Syria became independent, other provinces were lost in a similar way, and one after another the Mongol dynasties fell, until by the close of the sixteenth century hardly a vestige of the vast empire of Jenghis remained, unless the Mogul empire of India (n. 47) could be called such. Its power had passed into the hands of the Turkish and Chinese empires, or of other branches of the Mongol stock, such as the Kirghiz (see notes 163, 165), and the Kalmuks (162).

45. The word Tartar or Tatar had its origin in the Ta-ta Mongols, from which Jenghis Khan sprang. The armies of that great conqueror and his victorious generals were extensively recruited from the population of the regions through which they passed, especially the Kirghiz, the Uigurs, and other peoples who had helped him to make up the north Asiatic Turkish empire (founded in the fifth century, destroyed by the Arabs in the seventh, and its last fragments, the Kin and Khitan kingdoms, annihilated by Jenghis), some of whom joined him in a body. As a result the Mongol troops were not Mongols proper, but a mixture of various peoples, the greater portion of whom were closely allied to the Turks, both in blood and in history. Thus the word Tartar came to be applied to all the tribes belonging to the Turko-Mongol stock, but not recognized as being either Turks or Mongols in the proper sense of the word.

Its special application is to the more or less nomadic tribes of Turkish affinities inhabiting the Russian and Siberian steppes and the region (stretching from the Caspian sea to the Gobi desert and from Lake Balkash to the Kuen-lun mountains), hence called Tartary (Turkestân, see n. 30). Many of the Tartars have a large admixture of Finno-Samoyedic blood (see n. 164), and also, especially those of the south, now called Turkomans, of Aryan and Semitic.

46. Timûr-i-Leng, or Timûr-i-Lang (i. e., Timûr the Lame, corrupted by Europeans into Tamerlane), was the son of Teragai, the head of the Berlas tribe, and great grandson of Karachar Nevian, the minister of Jagatai, third son of Jenghis Khan. Timûr was born in 1333, and after having been appointed governor of Transoxiana by the Jagatai Khan of Kashgar was proclaimed king at Balkh in 1369. He conquered Persia and northern India in 1397-9, Syria in 1400, and Asia Minor in 1402, defeating the Osmanli Sultan Bajazet I. at Ancyra in 1404 and making him prisoner.

He died in 1405, and when his empire fell to pieces his descendants maintained their sovereign authority for some time in the state of Khokand or Ferghâna (see n. 158).

47. Timûr's grandson, Zehir-ed-dîn Mohammed, commonly called Babur or Baber, "the Tiger," was eminent both as a man of letters and a warrior and statesman. He came to the throne of Ferghâna in 1494, re-conquered the states occupying the territory now included in eastern Turkestan and Afghanistan, and finally possessed himself of northern India. He transferred his capital to Delhi and in 1525-6 extended his sway over the whole of India. The great empire that he founded reached the height of its glory under Akbar (1556-1605) and Jehan (1627-58), and flourished till 1748. The last nominal successor of Baber was deposed by the British government as recently as 1857. This was commonly called the Mogul empire, and its head the Great Mogul, the Hindus having the habit of calling all invaders from the north Moguls (i. e., Mongols), just as the Orientals generally speak of all Europeans as Franks.

Although Baber's family was apparently of Mongol origin it had been so long mingled with peoples of Turkî stock both by blood and association that he was really even less a Mongol than his grandfather Timûr, who himself is commonly known as Timûr the Tartar.

48. For example, the Cycle of Feridûn and Zohak, that of Sêistân (the stories of Sâm, Zâl, Rustam and Sohrâb); that of Segsar and Mazinderân; that of Siâvash and Goderzides; that of Khosrû and Afrâsiâb, that of Gushtâsp, and that of Isfendiâr. Pizzi (see p. 18), who makes this division, shows that the most important cycle, that of Rustam, must have been originally formulated in a spirit hostile to that of the Avesta.

49. *Causeries du Lundi*, Paris, 1850, p. 343.

50. Ossian, the reputed author of the poetical legends gathered in the Highlands of Scotland by James McPherson, which furnished the basis of the "Poems of Ossian" published by him in 1762. These poems have been the subject of animated controversy among Gaelic scholars from that day to this, but it is now pretty well established that they were in their present form original with McPherson, the so-called originals published by him in 1818 being a mere patchwork, consisting partly of Highland folk-songs, and partly of connective matter of his own.

But the really ancient materials which were the basis of his work were genuine, and Ossian, son of Fingal or Oisian, son of Finn, is a real and very prominent character of Celtic story.

The stories of the Oisianic or Finnian cycle, which in Scotland circulated almost exclusively in oral tradition, began to appear in the

written literature of Ireland about the 12th century. Before that time they had formed part of that body of tales the knowledge of which was an important part of the *Filidacht*, or poetic and prophetic art, which was a great national institution for many centuries, and was cultivated by regularly organized colleges that were an outgrowth of the fraternities of Druidic bards. Oisian was not only the hero of a whole cycle of legend, but the reputed author of many poems dealing with subjects of a similar character, several of which are still extant. In McPherson's Ossian the Oisianic cycle is mingled, as it is said never to be in the ancient Celtic poems, with the characters of the earlier heroic cycle of Cuchulaind, which has been pronounced one of the most complete poetic cycles that any land has produced.

51. The *Nibelungen-lied*, or *Lay of the Nibelungs*, is an epic poem which, as it now stands, was written in the Middle High German language in the first part of the thirteenth century. The sagas of which it is composed existed in the form of separate poetical episodes for centuries before that time, but they were brought together into a complete whole by the Minnesinger Heinrich von Ofterdingen, a canon of Coblenz.

Wagner's trilogy of musical dramas, *The Ring of the Nibelungen*, was based partly upon the *Nibelungen-lied*, but chiefly upon the heresongs of the Norse Eddas, which gave the Low German or Saxon form of the story.

The chief scene of the adventures of the *Nibelungen*, or possessors of the *Nibelungs'* hoard, is the Burgundian kingdom, which from 413 to 534 A. D. extended over eastern and southern France, northern Italy, the western part of Switzerland, and the upper Rhine, with its capital at Worms. The chief hero of the epic is Siegfried (see n. 56) and the culminating catastrophe of the story was the defeat of the Burgundians by Attila (see n. 41).

52. *Mahâbhârata*, "The Great Bharatas," is one of the two great national epics of India. It is the longest poem in the world, containing no less than 120,000 couplets, and being therefore about eight times as large as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* combined. It dates in its present form from about the second century B. C., but much of it was probably composed at least several centuries earlier, and embodied traditional materials of unknown and varying age.

Its leading subject is the great war between the princes of the Kaurava and Pândava families, both of which were descended from Bharata who belonged to the Paurava branch of the Lunar race of kings. They were contending for the possession of the kingdom whose capital was Hastinapura (Elephant City), whose ruins are the ruins which are still to be seen fifty-seven miles northeast of Delhi, under the shadow of the Himalayas. It is a curious fact that Gobineau traces a connection between the victorious Pandavas and the princely family from which Rustam sprang (see note 79).

53. The *Ramâyana*, or *Adventures of Râma*, is the second of the two great epics of India. It is ascribed to the poet Vâlmiki, and the greater portion of it may have been written by him.

It contains about fifty thousand lines, and was probably composed for the most part about the fifth century B. C., receiving its final recen-

sion at the beginning of the third century, though various additions and alterations have been made since the latter date, which have produced a number of different versions of the poem. (For its contents see n. 59).

54. The Avesta, the sacred book of the Zarathustrian or Mazdean religion, now represented chiefly by the Parsis of Bombay, is to the Iranians what the Veda is to the Hindus.

The Avesta represents the primitive religion of the Indo-Iranian people, as gradually modified among the Iranian tribes, and finally reformed by the prophet Zarathustra in the sixth century B. C.

Most of the books of the Avesta were lost after the fall of the Old Persian empire, and the present collection of the remaining fragments was begun by Valkash, one of the last of the Parthian kings, and finished by the Sassanian monarch Shapur II (309-380). It consists of two parts, the larger and the smaller Avesta. The first contains the Vendidad, or body of religious laws and associated traditional histories; and the Vispered and Yasna, which are liturgical collections. The smaller Avesta is composed of short prayers for the private use both of the priests and people, to which are appended several fragments which have no place in the large Avesta.

The Avesta ("Law") is commonly called by Europeans the Zend Avesta, and the language in which it is written (allied to the Sanscrit on the one hand, and the Old Persian of the monuments on the other) the Zend; but this use of the word Zend is based upon a misunderstanding, for it means "commentary," and refers to the annotations in Pahlavi (25) which accompany the text in most of the manuscripts.

55. The Veda (literally "Science") or old sacred literature of the Âryan Hindus is divided into several portions, each of which is called a Veda. They are said to be three, four, five or six in number, according to how many of the more recent classes of works are included.

The three original Vedas are the Rig, the Yajur, and the Sâma. The Rig Veda is the oldest, and is the basis of the two others. The Yajur is simply an arrangement of the hymns, with but few additions, for use in sacrifices, and the Sâma Veda another arrangement of them for use in the Soma ceremonies or sacramental rites. Most of the hymns in the second and third are taken from the first.

A fourth Veda is usually counted, the Atharva Veda, a work of somewhat later date, which contains many beautiful hymns not in the others and is also a liturgical book, being intended for the use of the chief sacrificing priest.

When a fifth Veda is spoken of, it usually means the Tantras, a collection of treatises written chiefly during the period corresponding to the middle ages of Europe, and intended as a summary of the whole body of religious and scientific learning of the Hindu people. Some times the Purânas, a body of mythological and devotional works written in the early part of the Christian era, which form the chief basis of modern Hinduism, are called the Fifth Veda, in which case the Tantras are, by those who set a high value upon them, called the Sixth. Each of the four accepted Vedas consists of the Mantra or collection of hymns, the Brâhmanas or commentaries upon them, and the Upanishads, or mystical and philosophical treatises professing to give the true inner sense and higher significance of the foregoing. When a European

speaks of the Veda, he usually means the Mantra of the Rig Veda; but when a Hindu does so he in most cases means the Upanishads.

The oldest hymns of the Rig Veda were composed as early as from 1500 to 1100 B.C., and by some scholars they are attributed to the third millennium before our era.

56. Siegfried, the hero of the *Nibelungenlied*, was the youngest son of Sigmund, king of Xanten in the Netherlands, near the mouth of the Rhine. He won the war-like princess Brunhilde, of Issland, or Yssel-land (on the upper part of the river Yssel) to be the wife of Gunther of Burgundy, whose sister Kriemhild he himself espoused, but was afterwards slain through the instrumentality of Brunhilde, as the result of a quarrel between the two women.

The city of Worms takes its name from the dragon (*Lint Wurm*) that Siegfried slew; and many other reminders of the hero exist in the city and the surrounding region, such as the Rose Garden on the opposite bank of the Rhine, associated with loves of Siegfried and Kriemhild, and the Drachenfels (Dragon Rock), overlooking the river, where he slew the dragon, is pointed out to this day.

57. Roland, the most celebrated hero of medieval romance, was one of the twelve paladins of Charlemagne. He was especially famous for his prowess and heroic death at the battle of Roncesvalles in the Pyrenees, where he was surprised and slain by the Gascons in 778.

The Cycle of Charlemagne, to which the stories of Roland and the other paladins belong, includes the most famous of the *chansons de geste*, or Frankish heroic ballads.

The story of Roland appears in the Chronicle attributed to Turpin, Archbishop of Rheims (753-794), but probably put in writing not earlier than the tenth or eleventh century; and also in the famous *Chanson de Roland*, ascribed to Theroulde, one of the Norman *trouvères* (equivalent to the Provençal *troubadours*) of the eleventh century. Roland, in the Italian form of his name, Orlando, is the hero of Bojardo's *Orlando Innamorata*, and above all of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*.

58. The Cid is the great national hero of the Spaniards, Ruy Diaz de Bivar. He was a member of one of the noblest families of Castile, and was born at Bivar, near Burges, about 1040. He was commander of the forces of King Sancho II (1063-73), and afterwards carried on a series of wars on his own account (1080-1099). His prowess, especially during the latter period, gained him the title of El Campeador, "the champion," and from the Moors of Valencia, whom he subjugated and ruled over during the latter years of his life, has come the surname by which he is known to fame. *Cid* being identical with the Arabic *sayyid*, "lord," or *sid-y*, "my lord."

The Cid is the hero of an old Spanish tragedy by Guilhem de Cantro, and of an epic (*Poema del Cid Campeador*) by Sanchez (1775). Corneille's tragedy on the same subject is said to have gained him his title of the Great Corneille (*Le Grande Corneille*). The English poet Southey has written a "Chronicle of the Cid."

59. Râma Chandra (i.e., the moon-like or mild Râma) is the hero of the one of the episodes of the *Mahâbhârata* (n. 52) and also of the whole *Râmâyana* (n. 53). He was the son of Dasharatha, a king of the Solar race, reigning at Ayodhya (Oude) in northeastern India. He married Sitâ,

daughter of Janaka, king of Videha, the ancient kingdom of which the capital was Mithila. Sitâ was carried off by Râvana, the demon king of Ceylon, who at that time was the terror of all India. Râma conquered Râvana, and recovered his bride, who had been true to him through all her captivity.

60. The existing sources of information on the history of Irân are the following:

(a) The ancient historians who wrote in the Greek and Latin languages, especially Herodotus, Ctesias, and the Armenian Moses of Chorene. Some scattering information may be gleaned from other classical writers, as for instance the dramatist Æschylus, cited in n. 105, below. Something of permanent value may also be sometimes winnowed out from that portion of the Greek myths which is of Oriental origin, though none of the efforts in this direction thus far made can be considered successful.

The accounts given by the classic historians though valuable, are far from trustworthy, as they are exceedingly conflicting, and represent for the most part the oral testimony of sometimes prejudiced persons taken by men to whose minds the ideas and usages and institutions of Irân were utterly foreign and confusing, and who were exceedingly liable to misunderstand them. This, however, has been the most constantly and fully accessible source of information, and European historians were in the habit, until very recently, of depending exclusively upon it.

(b) The Avesta (see n. 54), which represents the earliest records of Eastern Irân; as it now stands it is only a fragment, and its historical references moreover are merely incidental. The Avesta is provincial rather than national in its character; with this proviso it is doubtless eminently trustworthy, save for the intermingling of mythical elements in historical form; but there is little agreement as to just how much allowance is to be made on this latter score.

(c) The Pahlavi (n. 25) books, which, while representing the traditions current in Persia in the Sassanian period, embody a large amount of data derived from the lost books of the Avesta. These works are primarily of a religious and not an historical character, and the view of history which they contain is warped by an almost exclusive dependence upon the Avestan cycle of tradition, and a consequent aggrandizement of the men and events with which the latter concerns itself.

(d) Certain cuneiform inscriptions in the old Persian and Assyrian languages are found in Assyria, and at Persepolis, Behistun and elsewhere in Persia. They chiefly emanate from Cyrus and his contemporaries, and Darius Hystaspes and his immediate successors. These are the most exact and trustworthy of all the sources, but they cover only a short period, were written in an Assyrian environment, and deal almost exclusively with the achievements of the supreme monarchs themselves.

(e) The Shah Nâma, representing a tenth century compilation from all the written and oral sources then available in Eastern Irân. It is the oldest Persian work of a professedly historical character now known to be extant. It uses the Avestan story and continues it down to the modern period; but it makes large use of earlier historical compilations and local chronicles, including the royal archives of the Sassanidæ (see

n. 120, ¶ 5), and represents to us many sources which are no longer at our disposal. On account of length of time which separates it from the earlier periods of Iranian history and the heterogeneous character of its materials its historical perspective must often be greatly at fault, and there may also be an undue exaggeration of the importance of the Sistanese kingdom and its hero Rustam on account of the fact that Firdausi wrote in Zabulistân (Ghazna) and made use of the family records of the Samides (notes 134, 136).

(f) The historians and historical poets of a later date (twelfth to eighteenth centuries of our era) written in the new Persian and Arabic languages, including innumerable Nâmas or historical epics, and many local chronicles of unknown date, the present manuscripts of which are modern and cannot be traced back with certainty beyond the time of Firdausi. The writings of this class, commonly referred to in these notes as "the Chroniclers" represent what remains of the non-Avestan sources of the Shah Nâma, but with the probabilities of error increased by the lapse of centuries and the bold and uncritical attempts characteristic of Mohammedan authors everywhere, to connect the local history with the narratives and genealogies of the Old Testament and the national traditions of the Arabs. The local chronicles are especially valuable, however, as they were recorded under the protection of the powerful Dehkans or nobles of the ancient stock (the successors of the primitive local kings and the Pahlavas or paladins of the Parthian period) who preserved the Mazdayasnian faith and the ancient traditions long after the mass of the population had been Mohammedanized and Semitized.

Probably only a small proportion of the existing works of this group have yet been studied by any European scholar, and their positive and relative value has not yet been carefully and intelligently estimated. As examples of those which have been made use of may be mentioned the following:

The History of Taberistân, by Abdullah Mohammed, son of Hassan, son of Isfendiâr, a local chronicle of Mazinderân (n. 91) and Elburz (see n. 142), written in the thirteenth century and particularly valued by Gobineau (see under *h* below). It was based, he informs us, on: (i) Pahlavi documents in the library of the kings of Taberistân; (ii) a Syndhian manuscript translated into Arabic in 694, only seventy-two years after the Mohammedan conquest; (iii) the *Avend Nâma*, a special collection of the traditions of Mazinderân; and (iv) the works of Ibn el Mozaffa, "one of the most ancient of Persian historians, and the fragments of whose writings have an inestimable value."

The Heya el-Muluk, a local history of Sêistân.

The Tarikh-e-Fars, or "Chronicle of Fars."

The Chronicle of Hamza-Isfahany, based upon the oldest narratives of Ibn el Mazeffa and the *Khodai Nama*.

The Rouzet-Essefa. This like the last-named is strongly biased by Semitic (Biblical) tradition.

The Behr-el-Mesab, or "Sea of Genealogies."

The Desatîr, and the *Dabistân al Mezaheb*, which is largely based upon it, both strongly influenced by Hindu and Buddhistic cosmogonic conceptions.

The *Kush Nâma*, rather a romance than a history, and abounding in startling anachronisms, but taken seriously by the Count de Gobineau.

(g) Some side-lights may be expected from the literature and traditions of the various Asiatic peoples, including the Jews, Finno-Samoyedes, Turko-Mongols, Chinese, and Hindus, especially the last-named; but almost nothing of a serious character has thus far been done in the way of collecting illustrative data from these sources, and this task cannot be entered upon until the fuller and more definite data from other sources have been collated and harmonized.

(h) Modern historians, Oriental and Occidental, who have endeavored to reconcile the conflicting information emanating from these various sources. The Turkish historian Yakut, the Persian Mirkhond, the Frenchman Gobineau and the Englishman Sir John Malcolm, may be mentioned as authors who have made large use of Firdausi and other Oriental authorities.

To the Count de Gobineau, who wrote his history on Persian soil, belongs the credit for the most serious attempt thus far made in this direction; but even his work is far from satisfactory, and is out of date in view of the more recent archeological discoveries and the veering of the ethnologists back to the old theory of the European origin of the Aryans.

61. Kaiumers appears in the Avesta as Gaya Maretan, the first king of the Aryan nations. In the later Pahlavi books he is called Gayomarth. He was called Garshah, or king of the mountain, on account of the place where he ruled, which was probably on the Pamir uplands, where a language almost identical with that of the Avesta, the so-called Zend—is spoken in Warkha and neighboring villages.

62. From deva, a shining one, a god. The Indo-Aryans originally had two words for god, *deva* and *asura*. Owing to the necessity of a distinction between the good powers and the evil the word *asura* among the Hindus and the word *deva* among the Iranians came in course of time to be appropriated to a class of evil beings. But in neither case were they looked upon as wholly and irremediably evil, and both terms were applied to fierce and powerful non-Aryan tribes as well as to wicked spirits.

63. Several of the Persian historians consider Siâmak to have been the successor of Kaiumers, and some have even made him his grandson, inserting between them the name of Pishi. He does not seem to be mentioned in the present text of the Avesta. The local traditions of Mt. Demavend represent him as having been at the head of the first Iranian colony which settled in the modern Elburz.

64. Hushang is called in the Avesta Haoshyanga. He was the founder of the Paradhata or Peshdadian dynasty. He conquered the Devas of Mâzana (Mazinderân) and Varena, and is said to have lived on Hara-berezaiti or Mt. Elburz. Some of the Persian historians insert the name of another king between Siâmak and Hushang.

65. Tahumers is called Takhma-Urupa in the Avesta, which represents him as the brother instead of the father of Jemshîd. Some of the Chroniclers insert three or four additional reigns between those of Hushang and Jemshîd,

66. Jemshîd, that is Yima Kshâêta, "Shah Yima" or "Yama the King." He was the son of Vivanghat, who is called in the Vedas Vivasvat. According to the Avesta Jemshîd came to an end by being sawn asunder by his brother Spitura, who had headed the rebellion against him and betrayed him to Zohâk. His name sometimes stands, both in the Veda, the Avesta and the modern Persian literature, for the whole race of early kings who are supposed to have ruled in Irân prior to the first Semitic conquest.

67. Zohâk is the Azi-Dahâka or Dahâk of the Avesta, which represents him as the king of Bawri or Babylon, where he lived in the Palace of the Stork, and oppressed all the seven quarters of the earth. He is probably a personification of the Assyrian or Semitic power. In its earlier mythological use the word signified the storm-fiend, who in a material sense wars on the kingdom of light.

68. Feridûn is the Thraetaona of the Avesta. He was the heir of the valiant Athwya clan, rich in cattle, which lived in Varena, on the slope of Elburz. The Chronicle of Taberistân gives a list of ten Abtiyans (Athwyas), lords of Elburz, who were descended from Jemshîd and ruled as vassals of Media and Assyria (Zohâk). Feridûn's father and predecessor in the lordships was called Athwya Pur-Tora, and his mother was Ferareng, the daughter of Tyhâr, king of Bisila, on the western shores of the Caspian. Malcolm, with some plausibility, identifies Feridûn with the Arbaces of Herodotus and Ctesias, and the Verboces and Rhodanus of Moses of Chorene (748-30). It is possible that the long reign ascribed to him by Firdausi covers those of a number of obscure successors whose names have been almost forgotten (see n. 78).

69. The apron of Kâva, under the name of "the Kâvânî," was thenceforth the national standard of Irân, down to the Arab conquest in 652, when it was captured by the Caliph Omar and disappeared. The family of Kâva became very powerful and important as the hereditary rulers of Garena or Varena, a principality directly south of the patrimony of Feridûn in Elburz. Mt. Demavend itself was included in their domain, and branches of their house gradually extended over a considerable portion of northern Media and western Parthia.

70. According to the Avesta the wives of Feridûn were Erenavâch and Savanghavâch, the daughters (i. e. descendants) of Yima, and the most beautiful women of the world, whom he rescued from the power of Zohâk. The first bore him Airyi (Irij), and the second Tura and Sairima (Selu). Some Persian writers claim that the mother of the latter two was a daughter of Zohâk.

71. The name Rûm is applied by the Orientals in a general way to all western lands.—especially Syria, Asia Minor, and the adjoining portions of Europe and Africa.

72. Khaver is identified by Gobineau with southern Media.

73. The name of Tûr is perhaps a personification of the hostile races which have constantly troubled the northern and eastern borders of Irân from a very remote period. It more probably refers to a man or a tribe of Indo-Iranian origin that established a loosely organized empire, presumably about the time of Feridûn, among the more or less nomadic peoples of central Asia. Some have supposed that the earlier of these

Asiatic Scythians were of the Âryan stock and perhaps the progenitors of the Germans and the Letto-Slavs (Russians, Lithuanians, etc.); in this case they would have been closely allied in blood to the Iranians; but this opinion loses whatever plausibility it may have had when the theory of the Asiatic origin of the Âryans is abandoned. It is certain, however, that a Mongoloid element (originally Chudic or Finno-Samoyedic) was never lacking among them, and that in later times it greatly predominated (see note 13).

74. See p. 14 and n. 30.

75. China, that is, the region across the mountains to the eastward, especially Chinese Turkestan and the Tibetan tablelands.

76. See p. 14.

77. According to the Chronicle of Taberistân the husband of Irij was son of Kyanwesh or Shadekan, brother of Feridûn.

78. Minochîr is not mentioned by name in the Avesta, but is frequently referred to in the Pahlavi works. According to some of the Chroniclers he was the son of Irij himself. In the Pahlavi books it is said that all the mobeds or priests are descendants of Minochîr. The Chronicle of Fars puts Minochîr at the 11th generation from Feridûn. It is quite probable that this and some of the other reigns of abnormal length include those of obscure predecessors or successors whose names have been forgotten. Minochîr is plausibly identified by Sir John Malcolm with the Mandaucæ (730-715) of Ctesias and Moses of Chorene; others have supposed him to be the Cyaxares of Herodotus, which is an absurd anachronism. He is said by the Chroniclers to have transferred the capital from Temisha in the mountains of Mazinderân to Ragha in Media.

79. The relation of the history of Sâm and his family (called the Sâmâs or Samidae, from an earlier prince of the same name) to that of their nominal suzerains, the Iranian emperors, is very uncertain. Chronological considerations make it certain that Firdausi has erred in his method of adjusting the two sets of documents from which he chiefly derived his materials. He was perhaps misled by a repeated recurrence of the same names in the lineage of the Sistanese princes: Zâl, Sâm and Rustum seem to have been names of common occurrence in that family, and it is more than probable that Firdausi, and very likely some of the authorities on which he depends, were thus deceived into fusing together the history of several different persons of similar appellations. Probably the Sâm who was the grandfather of the great Rustam lived at a later period than that ascribed to him in the Shah Nâma. In order to explain the recorded intercourse of Sistanese kings called Sâm, Zâl and Rustam to so many successive shahs during a period, even according to the most conservative and critical estimate, of 250 years, he has been obliged to ascribe to them an impossible length of life. This does not imply any fundamental unreliability in the Persian traditions, but simply a false standard of historical criticism applied to the reconciliation of independent and more or less conflicting documents.

80. The word Pehliva or Pahlavan, which is constantly applied to the Iranian heroes in the Shah Nâma, and in the days of the Parthian empire had come to be the technical appellation of the most important class of Iranian nobles, is precisely equivalent both in form and mean-

ing to the title of paladin, applied in European history and romance to the heroes of the court of Charlemagne. It is a remarkable phenomenon that the very same word should in such widely separated peoples have received precisely the same highly specialized signification (see n. 22).

81. Zabulistân, sometimes called Zavulistân, is the land of which Sêistân was the dominant state, or more especially, that occupying the upper portion of the basin of the Helmand (see n. 210). It seems to have at times extended eastward into the Panjâb, and was doubtless the Sâkaladwipa of the Mahâbhârata (see n. 52). The basin of the Helmand was called in the Avesta "the bright, glorious Haêtumant, the eleventh of the good lands made by Mâzda [i.e., occupied by the Iranians], the seat of the glory of the Aryan nations, the home of the Kaianian race" (see n. 89, ¶ 2).

82. Nâder or Nodar is frequently mentioned in the Avesta as Naotara, called by the Persian chroniclers Nuzer, the founder of the heroic family of that name, from which sprang the famous paladins Tusa (Tûs) and Vistauru (Gustahem), and also, at a later generation, Hutaosa, wife of Vistâspa (Gushtâsp), by right of whom the latter (see n. 111) is often called a Naotaride. It is almost equivalent to Achaemenian or Kaianian, but includes also the immediate ancestors of Achæmenes. In Malcolm's scheme of harmony he is identical with the Sasarmus of Ctesias and Moses of Chorene, and reigned from 715-708 B.C.

83. Delistan is probably the same as the Dahi countries of the Avesta. Classical historians say that the land of the Dahae was south of the Oxus. The Chinese geographers give the name Ta-hia to the same people. These seem to have been one of the Mongoloid tribes subject to the Turkî kings. The Dahi tribe in the western part of the Panjâb (n. 199, ¶ 2) are believed to be their descendants.

84. Zav, Zew or Zab is a contraction of the name Uzava, which is given to the same monarch in the Avesta. Malcolm recognizes him in the Artukas of Ctesias and Moses of Chorene, and dates his reign 708-703 B.C.

85. Thamaspa or Tahmaspa is called in the Avesta Tumaspa, and is claimed by the Pahlavi books to have been a son of Nôdar. But some of the Persian chroniclers put five generations between them, representing the intervening ancestors to have been the lords of the ancient Elburz principality of the Athwiyas (see n. 68).

86. Garshâsp is the equivalent of Kereshâspa, the name of the great military hero of the house of Sâma, whose exploits are described in the Avesta. Perhaps it is a reminiscence of a temporary reign or protectorate of the Samîdæ here, at which the Avesta more than hints. In that case his name does not belong in the list of the Peshdâdian kings, in which it usually forms the closing name; if not he is an entirely different personage from the Kereshâspa of the Avesta. He is sometimes represented by the Persian chroniclers as the son of Zav's brother.

87. Afrâsiâb or Afrasiyab is called in the Avesta Frangrasyan, and is said to have been king of Tûrân for two hundred years.

This figure probably includes the reigns of several obscure kings who have fallen away from human memory, or again his name may stand for a whole dynasty, as often happens in histories based in part on

oral tradition. The Persian chroniclers place him at the seventh generation from Tûr, son of Feridûn.

According to one genealogy he was "the son of Pesheng, the son of Shanpaub, the son of Wershyb, the son of Terk, the son of Zew, the son of Sherwan, the son of Tûr."

Many of the Turkî dynasties that have reigned in Central Asia during the present era have claimed to be descended from Afrâsiâb.

88. The Rai is the river in Media upon which the city of Rai or Rhaga was situated.

89. Kai Kobâd is the Kavâta of the Avesta, and is said in the Pahlavi books to have been the adopted son of Uzava (Zav). Some of the Persian chroniclers make him the son of Dad, and grandson of Nurkan, who was the son of Nôdar's son Mansu. Gobineau doubts whether he could have been so near a kinsman to Zav. Malcolm identifies him with the Deijoces of Herodotus, the Artæus of Ctesias and the Arphaxad of the Book of Judith, and assigns his reign to the years 696-656. In this case Malcolm is certainly wrong. The names given represent the founder of a dynasty of independent Median kings which arose after the first Iranian empire, that of the Peshdadians, had been overthrown by the Turaniâns. Deijoces, called on the Assyrian monuments Dajaukku, is said to have ruled at Ecbatana in Media, which had very likely been the seat of the last Peshdadian emperors, a fact which may have caused him to be considered by the Mediæ historians as the successor of these. He was tributary to the Assyrian emperor but rebelled, and Sargon claims to have defeated him in the year 713 B. C.

It is not impossible that the Persian tradition has in some measure confused Kai Kobâd, the founder of the dynasty of the Kaianians or Achæmenidae, with Deijoces, the founder of the Median kingdom, and has attributed to the former some of the deeds of the latter. But a comparison of the data given by Cyrus and Darius Hystaspes in their inscriptions at Persepolis and Behistun with those furnished us by the Persian annals confirms Gobineau's opinion that Kai Kobâd's authority did not extend over Media.

Kai Kobâd is evidently the Hakhamanish of the Behistun inscription, the Achæmenes of the Greeks. He probably reigned in the northeastern part of Irân, between Sêistân and the Oxus, very likely at Balkh (see n. 34). He was apparently a creature of his all-powerful vassals, the line of Sistanese princes for whom the name of Rustam stands, and who seem to have given him the imperial dignity simply because it was not convenient for them to assume it themselves. The Avesta speaks of the Kaianians as having come from the shores of Lake Hamân in Sêistân.

90. Kai Kâûs is repeatedly mentioned in the Avesta, under the name of Kavi Usa and Usadhan. He was the oldest of the four sons of Arpivangu (called also Aipivohu, Kai Apiveh and Aphra), the son of Kai Kobâd. His brothers were Arshan (Kai Arish), or rather, as we learn from the Inscription of Behistun, Arshan's father Airyaramna; Pisanah (Kai Pashîn), and Byarshân (Kai Karmîn), all of whom are called kings in the Avesta, as well as in Firdausi—the word *Kai* (Kavi in the Avesta) having that meaning. He is sometimes erroneously called the son of Kai Kobâd. At least one Persian chronicler asserts that Arpivangu

(whom he calls Kenabiyah, probably by confusion with the Kamujiya lower down in the family tree) occupied the throne between the death of Kai Kobâd and the succession of Kai Kâûs.

In the light of the inscriptions of Darius Hystaspes and Cyrus the Great, we must identify Arpivanghu with Sispis or Shishpish (the Teispis of the Greeks) their common ancestor, and not with the Median king Phraortes (of Herodotus) or Artynes (of Ctesias), as Malcolm would have it.

Kai Kâûs himself is no other than the first Cyrus (Kuras), the grandfather of Cyrus the Great. According to the unimpeachable testimony of the "Cylinder Inscription" of Cyrus, both Kuras I and his father Sispis, "of the ancient seed royal," were kings of Ansan or Anzan, which is undoubtedly equivalent to Susiana (see n. 205, end).

The Persians have almost forgotten the reign of Sispis, which was probably very short, and, by a very natural mistake, confused the reigns of Kuras I (Kâûs) of Anzan and Kamujiya I. (Siâvush) of Anzan, with their immediate successors Kuras (Cyrus the Great) and his son Kamujiya (Cambyses), who reigned over all Irân.

Sir John Malcolm is, of course, entirely wrong in identifying Kai Kâûs with the Cyaxares (634-594) of Herodotus and the Astibares of Ctesias. The prince represented by these names was a king of the Medes or Mada, and entirely unconnected with the family of Hakhamanish.

91. Mazinderân seems to have been the seat of the kingdom of Feridân and to have been held continuously by the Iranians from a period long anterior to his reign. Perhaps the independent nation of Mazinderân which was still the abode of the Devas at this later epoch was the region to the northwest, now covered in part by the constantly encroaching waters of the Caspian, and in part transformed by the withdrawal of the Oxus (see n. 126) into an uninhabitable desert filled with the ruins of once populous cities.

92. The tradition undoubtedly referred originally to some powerful chief of an aboriginal race, who bore the soubriquet of "the White."

93. Sometimes called Arjenk. In the Avesta Arezô-shamana falls by the hands of Kerashâspa. Firdausi says that the White Deva spared the lives of the Iranians on account of an ancient treaty with Kerashâspa (see n. 86).

94. Hamaverân was a kingdom in northern Arabia or Mesopotamia. Gobineau considers it to be the Hauran, east of Palestine, but according to the more common opinion the reference is to the Assyrian empire.

95. Shaheh, that is Saïs, in the delta of the Nile, according to Gobineau.

96. This king is apparently the Amyrtes of Herodotus and Ctesias.

97. This incident has led some to identify Rustam with the Harpagus of Herodotus. In that case Herodotus has confused Rustam with Pirân Vîsa (see n. 101), and Kai Khosrû with his father Siâvush.

98. Siâvush, or Syâvaksh, or Syavakshâna, is a form of Syâvarshâna, under which name he is often mentioned in the Avesta, where he is sometimes called a king. The Avesta speaks of him as "beautiful of body and without fault."

Syavakshâna must, as the father of Kai Khosrû (Cyrus the Great), be recognized as the Kamujiya of the inscriptions, i.e., Cambyses I, king of Anzan.

99. Gersivâz or Karsivâz is called in the Avesta Keresavazda, and is there said to have fallen into the hands of Kai Khosrû at the same time with Afrâsiâb (see p. 29, and n. 87).

100. Tûs or Tûsa is several times mentioned in the Avesta as a great hero in the wars against Tûrân. He was a son or descendant of Naotara or Nâder, and one of the most celebrated members of that family. Gobineau identifies with him the Bagapates, Baguas-pati, "king of the Bagus," mentioned by Ctesias.

101. Pirân, the upright and able minister of Afrâsiâb, has been called the Turanian Nestor. He is the most noted member of the Visa or Wisa family, called in the Avesta "the sons of Vaêsaka."

102. Gangdis is called in the Avesta, Kangda. It stood on the top of the high mountain *Antare Kangha*, and had a famous citadel, perhaps older than the city itself, which the Avesta calls Khshathrô-saoka and speaks of as the central seat of the Vaêsakas (see last note). Gobineau connected it with the Ganges, to which the arms of the Sacæ (Sistanese) certainly penetrated; but James Darmesteter says that it was in Kuiva (see nn. 150, 220).

103. Neither Gudarz nor any other member of the powerful Kâva family are mentioned in the Avesta. Perhaps the chiefs of this northern house, like those of Sêistân in the south, incurred the hostility of the priestly authors of the Avesta by opposing the Zarathustrian reform.

104. Gav was the son of Gudarz, a descendant of Kâva, the smith. He married the celebrated heroine Banu-Kushasp, the daughter, or, as some say, the sister, of Rustam (see n. 119). Their only child seems to have been Bijun.

105. Kai Khosrû is in the Avesta Kavi (king) Husravah, "he who united the Aryan nations into one empire." He is identical with Cyrus the Great, though a part of the glory of this king is attributed to the first Cyrus of Anzan (Kai Kâûs) by a confusion resulting from the similarity of names (Kamujiya, son of Kuras, son of Kamujiya, son of Kuras). From the inscriptions of Cyrus (properly Kuras) himself and those of Nabonides, king of Babylon, we learn that after succeeding his father Kamujiya (Siâvush) on the throne of Anzan or Susiana he was attacked by Istuvegu (the Astyages of Ctesias) king of the Manda or nomads, whose army (probably composed largely of newly subjugated Medes, or Mâdas) revolted against him and delivered him up to Cyrus, who possessed himself of his capital city Agamtanu (Ekbatana, now Hamadan). Two years later Cyrus, who now calls himself for the first time King of Persia (Parsu) also, conquered the Shute or Arabs, and in 545 he entered Babylon, made Nabonides prisoner, and appointed Ugbaru (Gobryas) his governor there. He was succeeded by his son Cambyses (Kamujiya) II, whose reign has disappeared from the Persian tradition, as the result probably of an attempt to correct the error supposed to be indicated by the repetition of the same names in the same order (see above). Shortly before the death of Kamujiya he put to death secretly, according to the Greek historians, his brother Smerdis (called Barzia on the inscriptions); which gave an opportunity to the imposter

Gumatu to seize the throne. He was a magus or Babylonian priest and seems to have depended especially upon the support of the Semitic element. He was overthrown by a band of Iranian nobles, one of whom was Darius Hystaspes. According to Æschylus, whose tragedy, "The Persians," was produced in the theatre of Bacchus at Athens only forty-nine years after the death of Cambyes and at least thirty years before Herodotus wrote, two of the other conspirators, Maraphis and Artaphanes, ruled successively for short periods before the succession of Darius.

106. This is probably a reduplication of the victory mentioned three paragraphs farther on.

107. The Greek historian Ctesias attributes the final conquest of the Turanians (whom he calls Derbikkēs), not to Rustum, but to his son Feramorz, prusumably after the death of the hero. Cyrus himself, according to him, and his account is confirmed by Herodotus, fell in a great battle with the Turanian nomads, in which the Iranians were defeated, and Amorges (Feramorz, see n. 119), king of the Sacæ (Sistānese), revenges his death by defeating them utterly and annexing their country.

108. The Avesta locates this execution behind Lake Chechaska; which is supposed by some to be the Lake Urmia in Azer-baijan (see n. 132), but is more probably the Issyk-i-kul in Eastern Irān. It adds that it was not only to avenge the murder of Syāvarshāna, but also that of Aghraêratha. The latter, who was a righteous man, was Afrâsiâb's own brother, and had been put to death by him for assisting the Iranian king Minuchîr to escape from captivity.

109. This story of the peaceful close of Cyrus' reign and his resignation of the imperial dignity to become a hermit (after the fashion of the Brâhmanas, whose ancient rule of life required them to end their days in the forest) must have been 'imagined by some priestly chronicler, who perhaps confused Cyrus, the predecessor of Darius Hystaspes as "king of the world," with Ushtazpi or Lohurasp, his predecessor as king of Bactria (see n. 34). The Greek historians agree in testifying that he fell in battle with the Turanians (Derbikkēs or Massagetæ).

110. Lohrasp or Lohurasp is the Aurvat-aspa of the Avesta. Being the father of Vištâspa (Darius Hystaspes) he must be identified with the Ushtazpi of the inscriptions. He was, therefore, the son or grandson of Arsha and grandson or great-grandson of Airyaramna, who was a brother of Kai Kâûs (see n. 90), and grandson of Kai Kobâd (Hakhamanish), the founder of the family. The statement that the throne was bequeathed to him by the last representative of the elder line is confirmed by Herodotus, who says that Cambyes on his deathbed entreated the Achæmenidæ not to let the empire pass into the hands of the Medes. The kingdom over which Lohrasp ruled was in Eastern Irān, between Zabulistân and Tûrân. Darius calls it Parthia (Partû), but its suzerainty extended to the west and south far beyond the limits of the region to which that name is usually applied. His predecessors Arshana and Airyaramna must have been vassals of Cyrus II and Cambyes (II), and are therefore not counted by Darius when he speaks, in the Behistun Inscription, of the eight kings of his family who have preceded him. Lohrasp had many other sons besides Darius. The best known of these was

Zairi-vairi or Zarîr, whose heroic exploits are mentioned both in the Avesta and the Shah Nâma, and who is probably the Artabanus of the classic authors.

111. Gushtâsp is called in the Avesta Vishtâspa. He had one daughter, Humai, and ten sons. His prime-minister was Jâmâspa, a member of the Hvova family.

Jâmâspa and his brother, or near kinsman, Frashaoshtra, were among the first disciples of the prophet Zarathustra, and Gushtâsp, as the protector and most powerful follower of that prophet, stands in a relation to the Zarathustrian religion similar to that which Constantine bears to Christianity and Asoka to Buddhism. He is constantly referred to in the oldest portions of its sacred literature, and a whole section of the Little Avesta (see n. 54) bears his name—the *Vishtâsp Yast*. Gushtâsp is the Darius Hystaspes of the Greeks, which in Persian form would be Darayavaush Vishtaspa. In his own cuneiform rock-inscriptions he calls himself Dariawus, son of Ushhtazpi.

112. This evidently refers to the part taken by Darius in the overthrow of the Pseudo-Smerdis. The word Rûm is often used in the vaguest possible way with reference to the western lands. The city to which Gushtâsp went was by no means Jerusalem, as some Persian commentators have supposed, but Susa, where Cambyses had his residence. The young prince, finding no opening for his ambition at home in his father's principality, went to the court of the Great King to seek his fortune. When Cambyses II died, Lohurasp may have been considered emperor in Eastern Irân, but his authority was not recognized in Media, Persia or any of the western lands, over which the Pseudo-Smerdis held undisputed sway. Gushtâsp entered into the conspiracy which ended in the dethronement and death of the usurper, and soon afterwards was raised to the imperial throne, at the same time marrying Atossa, daughter of Cyrus and widow of her brother Cambyses. (called in the Avesta "Hutaosa, descendant of Naotara"), whereupon his father, making a virtue of necessity, resigned his claim and acknowledged his son's suzerainty.

113. Zarathustra Spitâma, the reformer of the Iranian religion, was the son of Purushaspa, and is commonly supposed to have been born in Media, either at Shîz in Ader-baijan or at Rai (or Rhages) in Media proper. He seems to have been named after, and often confused with a mythological character of the older tradition. The Mazdayasnian religion, or worship of Ahura Mazda as the supreme being, is represented in the Avesta to have existed before the time of Zarathustra, and to have been preached by several great teachers of earlier times and professed by Jamshîd himself. Those who accepted the prophet's teachings were called Mazdayasnians of Zarathustra's order, and all others were looked upon by them as heretics. Zarathustra married Hvogvi, daughter of Frashaoshtra (see note 111). The Spitâma family, to which the prophet belonged, seems to have been a very powerful one, even down into the Macedonian times. According to Ctesias, Cyrus gave to Spitaces, son (or descendant) of Spitâma, the land of the Derbikkes or Turanians.

114. Gurezm is called by Firdausi a relative of Isfendiâr, and by other Persian authors his brother. He is supposed to be mentioned in the

Avesta as "the holy Kavârazem," though the use of the epithet "holy" throws doubt on the identification. We learn from the classic historians, who call him Ariamenes, the ground of his jealousy. He was the eldest son of Gushtâsp (Darius), but born of a woman whom he married before coming to the throne. Ariamenes claimed the right of succession, but Darius, after consulting his counsellors, especially his brother Artabanus (Zarîr), decided that Xerxes (Isfendiâr) should be the next king, because his mother Atossa was the daughter of Cyrus and therefore the representative of the elder branch of the family.

115. Arjâsp is called in the Avesta Arejat-aspa, and is there spoken of as the head of the Hvyâona branch of the Hunus, or Huns.

116. Isfendiâr is mentioned in the Avesta under the name of Spento-data, but no details are regarding him are there given. He seems to correspond with the Xerxes of the Greeks. The latter exaggerated his power and splendor, partly through ignorance and partly from an instinct of self-glorification. On the other hand the Persian traditions, which have, for the most part, passed through the hands of Zarathustrian priests at one period or another, have subordinated him unduly to his father Gushtâsp (Darius Hystaspes), whom they aggrandize on account of his patronage of the great Iranian prophet and his zeal for the faith preached by him. Siâvush reigned from 485 to 465 B. C., over the vast empire bequeathed to him by his father. In his inscriptions he calls himself Hi-si and Kshayarsha, the Iranian form of the word Xerxes. Herodotus says that he gave himself up in the latter years of his reign to a life of dissolute pleasure, and finally was slain by Artabanus, captain of the guards. This may be simply a popular and hearsay version of the story of his end which Firdausi found fully described in the ancient chronicles.

117. See note 120, first paragraph.

118. Bashutân is probably identical with prince Peshôtanu, one of the nine brothers of Isfendiâr referred to in the Avesta.

Another brother bearing the name of the founder of the whole dynasty, Hakhamanish (Achæmenes), is mentioned by the Greek historians as having been appointed by him to the governorship of Egypt.

119. Feramorz, *i. e.*, "the illustrious Amorz," is the Amorges of Ctesias. He succeeded his father as king of the Sacæ (Sêistân and Zabulistân), and was a very successful and brilliant warrior, having been the hero of some of the conquests attributed by the Persian tradition to Rustam himself (see n. 107). Bahman (Artaxerxes Longimanus) at last made war upon him, or his successor, on the plea of avenging his father's death (see p. 31) and at conquered and slew him, reducing his kingdom from a condition of nominal vassalage down to a mere hereditary satrapy or province of the empire.

Besides his sons Sohrâb and Feramorz, Rustam had two daughters, Zarbanu and Banu-Kershasp (see n. 104), both of whom were warlike maidens, worthy of such a sire. According to Gobineau their exploits, and those of their nephew, Jehanghyr, son of Sohrâb, are recounted to this day in northern India, over part of which the sway of the Sacæ (Sistanese) extended. Feramorz had two sons, Azerberzyn and Sâm (III), who succeeded to the satrapy. Sâm's son and successor

Zâl II is conspicuous for his renunciation of the religion of Zarathustra, which the Achæmenidæ had imposed upon his family. He and all his nobility and people returned, says the Sistanese Chronicle, to their ancestral faith; which probably indicates the conversion of the Sacæ or Sakas to Hinduism, with which they had long been in contact in their Indian possessions, and which had a common origin with the primitive Iranian religion. Ferrakh, son of Zâl II, is said to have had a particularly glorious reign, and his grandson Jehrzað recovered the kingdom of Kabûl, which one of his predecessors had lost. Jehrzað's grandson, Mehrzað, transferred the seat of his power to Kashmîr and Little Tibet (Ladâkh) leaving his son Rustam II to succeed him in Sêistân. Mehrzað must have been the immediate progenitor of the three "Indo-Scythic" kings, Jushka, Kanishka and Huvishka, who are known to have ruled in Kashmîr just before the Christian era, and are called by the Hindus "Turushkas". Shah Firûz, a lineal descendant of Rustam II, occupied the throne in the time of the Sassanide king Anirshiran (531 A. D.). Firûz's son and successor Nejitiyar is the hero of an epic poem called the Nejitiyar Nâma. He became a convert to Islam, and his descendants continued to reign for a long time as vassals of the Arab Caliphs. At the present day a number of the noble families of Afghanistan—within the limits of which most of the ancient kingdom of the Samides is included—claimed to be descendants of Rustam. The whole line of kings of Sêistân is given in the Sistanese Chronicle, the *Heya-el-Moluk*, down to the date when that document received its last redaction, which was long subsequent to the Arab conquest.

120. Isfendiâr (Xerxes) was succeeded by his son Bahman, called by the Persian chroniclers Ardeshîr Dirazdest and by the Greeks Artaxerxes Longimanus (an exactly equivalent term), who reigned 467-425 B. C. We are assured, both by the Persian traditions and by the Jewish historian Josephus (37-100 A. D.), that he was the Assuerus of the book of Esther, the husband of Vasthi and Esther.

He was followed by his sister Homai (the Huma of the Avesta), for whose name the Greek historians substitute those of Xerxes II (425 B. C.), Sogdianus (425) and Darius Ochus. But both Sogdianus and Darius Ochus were illegitimate (the very appellation *Ochus* or *Nothos* having this signification), and Xerxes II, whether legitimate or not, is a negligible quantity, having reigned only a few weeks.

The first two were certainly looked upon by the Iranians as usurpers, and the third can hardly be said to have reigned at all, even according to the Greek story. Darius Ochus (425-362) was the husband and half-brother of Queen Homai, and the Greeks, who call her Parysatis, speak of her as exercising a large part of the regal functions, notwithstanding their supposition that Darius Ochus was the legal sovereign. Homai was succeeded by Arsaces, called by Firdausi Darab I and by the classical authors Artaxerxes Mnemon (395-359). According to the Greeks he was followed by his son Artaxerxes Ochus (the Urvasu of the cuneiform texts, 360-353), but his surname Ochus, "the Bastard", shows him to have been (or to have been considered) illegitimate, and on this account he is usually omitted from the Persian lists, as is his son Arses (330-336), who, his father being a usurper, could of course inherit no legitimate title. Firdausi and the other Iranian historiographers consider Darab II (Darius

Codomanus, 336-331) the next legitimate emperor of Irân. It was this emperor who was overthrown by Sikander or Alexander the Great (b. 356, d. 323).

After the death of Alexander and the division of his empire, Irân remained a part of the kingdom of Seleucus Nicator (reigned 312-280) and his son Antiochus Theos (reigned 261-246) until the year 250 B. C., when, under the leadership of Arsaces, who claimed to be a descendant of the ancient kings, the Iranians regained their independence, and from that time forward they constituted a confederacy of almost independent kingdoms—according to the Latin historian Pliny (b. 356, d. 323) eighteen in number, under the presidency or nominal suzerainty of the Arsacidæ, who ruled in Parthia. This confederacy, the Parthian empire of the classic historians, is called by the Oriental authors the Mulk-ul-Tawâif or Commonwealth of Tribes.

The Persian empire was re-organized in A. D. 226, under Ardeschîr, son of Sassan, who claimed to be a descendant of Bahman (Artaxerxes Longimanus). His descendants ruled over Irân until the Mohammedan conquest in 652.

121. Samengan, perhaps "the land of Sâmâ", may have been identical with Herat, where the descendants of Sohrâb reigned according to the local chronicles for many centuries.

122. Fraburz, or Feraburz, the brother of Siâvush (Cambyses of Anzan) is not mentioned in the Avesta. Gobineau writes the name Fer-Iborz, "the illustrious Iborz," and identified it with Æbaras, mentioned by Ctesias as a favorite general of Cyrus the Great.

123. *The Oxus stream*.—Arnold lays the scene of the battle in which Sohrâb fell upon the Oxus, although the Shah Nâma makes no mention of any river near the battle-field. It appears, however, from several passages in the great epic that the Oxus usually marked the boundary between the kingdoms of Irân and Tûrân; so that the place assigned to the combat by the present poem is by no means an impossible one. The context would indicate that Firdausi intended to represent the battle as taking place some distance on the Persian side of the frontier.

124. *The Tartar camp*.—See n. 45. The word Tartar is used here in its most general sense, to include the two stocks of peoples now commonly known to ethnologists as the Turkî and Mougols, respectively, and identical with the Turanians of Persian legend. Sohrâb's army is represented as containing some elements of a different stock, but as being under the control of the Tartar chiefs.

125. *To Peran Wisa's tent*.—Pîrân Wisa does not make his appearance in the Shah Nâma until many years after the time of Sohrâb's death (see p. 26).

126. *The low, flat strand of Oxus*.—The Oxus was a celebrated river of antiquity, called by the Arabs the Jihûn, and by the Tartars the Amu. It drains the whole western slope of the Pamîr, flows in a northwesterly direction through what is now the state of Bokhâra, and empties into the sea of Aral. Most of its course is through a level plain, and its channel constantly varies, sometimes to a most extraordinary extent. Three times since the beginning of the historic period its lower portion has entirely changed its direction, oscillating between the

Caspian and the Aral. When the Greek historians wrote, it flowed into the Caspian sea a short distance from its southern end; at the period of the Arab conquest it emptied into the Aral at right angles to its former bed; in the fourteenth century it again flowed into the Caspian, and in the sixteenth century it returned to the Aral.

127. *Pamere*.—A phonetic spelling of Pamîr. The Pamîr is a chain of mountains of vast height, from which all the other ranges of central Asia radiate, and which forms the northwestern extremity of the Himâ-layas, in the broad sense in which the latter word is commonly used in Europe and America. Its summit is a broad tableland, with an area of about 30,000 square miles, and it is often called by Oriental writers "the roof of the world" or "the crown of the world;" though these terms are often used in a more extended sense to include the Tibetan ranges as well, which have a general trend to the eastward at right angles to the Pamîr. It completely separates the two halves of Asia, presenting an almost impassible barrier to migrations and invasions. The Pamîr is now the point of meeting of the Russian, Chinese and Anglo-Indian empires.

128. *A dome of lath*.—The "yurts" of the Kirghîz and Kalmuks, and the "kibitkas" of the Turkomans are simply frameworks of wood covered with cloth. Among the Kirghîz the tents of the great chiefs are covered with red draperies, and those of other wealthy persons with white felt, but the great mass of the people use ordinary felt of dark color. The very poor substitute for the felt strips of bark or a kind of matting made of grass or reeds.

129. *Thick-piled carpets*—The tents of the modern Turkomans, whatever be their rank, rarely contain any other furniture than a few rugs, cushions and drapings.

130. Afrâsiâb, or Afrasiyab, was king of Tûrân, according to the ancient traditions, for no less than 150 years. He was the son of king Poshang, a descendant of Tûr, the second son of Feridûn. For his history see pp. 22-29.

131. Samarcand is the capital of Zer-afshan, or Zerafshan, which is the classic Sogdiana, and the Sogd of the medieval Arabs.

This land is a fertile valley watered by the Zerafshan, Kohik or Sogd river, the waters of which are distributed through the whole district in numerous canals and irrigating channels. To this circumstance it is indebted for its proverbial fertility, which enables it to export delicious fruits of many varieties to all parts of western Asia. According to the Avesta, it was the second country created by Ahura Mazda, the Supreme Deity—that is to say, the second inhabited by the Iranians. Samarcand, the ancient Marcanda, was between the ninth and eleventh centuries of our era one of the largest cities of Asia, and noted as a seat of learning and letters. In the fourteenth century it became the capital of the great conqueror Tamerlane, who lies buried in the crypt of one of its mosques.

The mosque of Shah Zindeh (Living King) in this city is the most magnificent Mohammedan place of worship in central Asia.

132. Ader-baijan, also called Azerbeijan, and formerly Kandsag, is identical with the classic Atropatene, but better known in modern times as Persian Armenia. It is the northwestern province of modern Persia,

and its capital, Tabriz, was two centuries ago the most popular city of that kingdom.

One author is probably mistaken in locating the little kingdom of Samangan where Sohrâb was born and brought up in Azerbaijan (see n. 121).

133. According to Firdausî, Sohrâb was only about fifteen years old at this time. But he must have been considerably older than this, for the Chronicle of Sêistân names his two sons, who are also mentioned by other authors.

134. Rustum, properly Rustam, the son of Zâl, is the greatest hero of Persian story, and is at once the Hercules and the Orlando of Irân. His family were the hereditary princes of Sêistân, and, according to Firdausi, prided themselves on their descent from Hushang, the second of the legendary Iranian kings. The oldest extant authority, a Pahlavi book called the Bundahesh, informs us that they were a branch of the royal house of Turân.

Rustam is not mentioned in the Avesta, but it ascribes many exploits similar to his to Kereshâspa, a hero of the house of Sâma, who is said by one of the Chroniclers to have been the brother of Zâl's great-grandfather Kurenk, but who would appear from a comparison of the Pahlavi books with the Avesta to have been identical with the second Sâm, Zâl's father.

It is natural that the records of Sêistân should aggrandize Rustam at the expense of Kerashâspa, since the latter had been heroized by the Avesta, and the Samides seem never to have accepted the Zarathustrian reform with a good grace (see n. 119, ¶ 2). The latter fact is sufficient in itself to account for the silence of the Avesta regarding him. Possibly some of the prodigies of war ascribed to Rustam are due to a confusion between him and later characters of the same name, such as the Rustam son of Destan who commanded the Iranian army at the time of the Arab conquest.

135. Sêistân, Sejestân, or Sîstân is a depressed plain at the point of contact of the present states of Persia, Afghanistan and Beluchistân. Part of it is in Afghanistan and part in Persia. It constitutes the lower portion of the basin of the Helmand surrounding Lake Hamûn (see nn. 210, 218) and the Zirrah depression (n. 211). It was anciently known to the classic authors as Zaranika or "Lake Land," and this name survived in that of the capital city Zarang down to modern times. The inhabitants, who were called by other peoples Drangæ or Zarangæ, belonged to the race called the Sacæ or Indo-Scythians, whence their land received the name of Sakastene Seghistân, now contracted to Sêistân or Sistân. On the Persian side of the Helmand there rises a solitary bluff still known as Koh-i-Kwaja, or castle of Rustam, celebrated in modern times for a long siege which it successfully sustained against the celebrated Nadir Shah in the eighteenth century. This region was the chief scene of the heroic history of Irân and is thickly strewn with ruins of great antiquity. One class of its present inhabitants call themselves Kaiyânîs (see nn. 81, 89, ¶ 3), and pride themselves on their descent from the ancient rulers.

136. Zâl, king of Sêistân, was the son of "Sâm the son of Neriman," a prince descended from the royal house of Irân, who was either identi-

cal with the Sâma Nairimanya (or Kereshâspa) of the Avesta, or else as the later Persian chroniclers suppose, the grand nephew of the latter. (For his history, see pp. 21-24, 31).

137. *His woolen coat*.—The dress of the modern Turkomans of both sexes is a long close garment, commonly of silk, reaching from the shoulders to the ankles. The men wear outside of this another called the chapân or khalef, which resembles a European dressing-gown, and for a head-dress they employ a light fur or sheepskin cap.

138. *A white cloak*.—Firdausi often represents the princes and noblemen of his epic as wearing a white cloak as an outermost garment.

139. Kara-Kul, i.e., "Black Lake." Several lakes and salt lagoons in Central Asia bear this name. The best known is the largest lake in the Pamîr system, and gives its name to an adjacent mountain, 13,500 feet high, to which the passage in the text doubtless refers. The upland vales of the Pamîr are the pasture of flocks of sheep, whose wool at that high altitude grows thick and close.

140. Haman, or Human, the brother of Pirân Vîsa. In the Shah Nâma he and Barman were the chief officers of the auxiliaries contributed by Afrasiâb to Sohrâb's army.

141. Casbin, Kaswin, or Kasbin, is a city on the southern slope of the Elburz mountains, south of the Caspian sea.

142. The Elburz, Alborz, or Alberz, is a mountain range running parallel with the southern shores of the Caspian sea and separating the shore country of Mazinderân from the ancient Media, which consisted of the western part of the Plateau of Irân. In a more limited sense, Mt. Elburz is a part of this chain rising in an almost isolated mass to the northwest of the city of Teherân.

It plays a prominent part in the legendary history of Irân, and is usually identified, both by Persian and European scholars, with the Hara Berezaiti, spoken of in the Avesta as the beautiful mountain made by Mazda, around which the sun, moon and stars revolve, the center of the seven regions of the earth, the glittering peak that pierces the sky, on which the gods and primeval heroes have offered the most acceptable sacrifice. But this poetical description is far more applicable to the Central Plateau of Asia, and, especially as the Avesta constantly speaks of the sun rising over the Hara Berezaiti, it is probable that this primitive Elburz was the Pamîr. After the center of the Zarathustrianism had been shifted from Bactria to Atropatene (see n. 132), Hara Berezaiti became identified with Elburz and the words used interchangeably.

143. *Aralian estuaries*.—The Aral-denghîz, or Sea of Islands, as it is called in Turki languages, is commonly known to European geographers as the Sea of Aral. It has no outlet, and is fed chiefly by the waters of the Oxus and Jaxartes (the Anu and Sir). It has fluctuated greatly in size, and during periods when the waters of the Oxus were diverted from it (see n. 126) has almost entirely disappeared. Even at the present time it is flanked by long stretches of reedy marsh, especially round the mouths of the rivers. The estuaries of the Oxus are filled with a dense growth of reeds from 20 to 25 feet high.

144. *Froze*.—An old English word, meaning frozen, or frosty.

145. *Caspian reed-bed*.—Most of the east coast of the Caspian is composed of saline lagoons stretching across the sandy plains for many

miles into the interior, which in some cases have become, in course of time, entirely separated from the lake and form salt pits or reservoirs, sometimes of vast size. Its northeastern shores, in particular, consist entirely of low, marshy and reedy tracts, which are flooded only whenever a strong west wind has prevailed for a few days. A succession of salty fens stretch from the Caspian to the Aral, pointing to a period when it received all the waters of the latter sea.

146. The enumeration of the divisions of Sohrâb's army which begins at this point has nothing corresponding to it in the epic. The tribes mentioned are those which at the present day inhabit Western Mongolia, Siberia and Turkestan, including the whole territory called until recently Tartary by our geographers. They have, for the most part, occupied the same general region ever since they first became known to history or science, and the ancestors of some of them must have constituted the troops contributed by King Afrasiâb to Sohrâb's army. Modern ethnologists class the Tartars, Turkomans, Kazaks and Kirghiz under the Turki branch of the Turanian race; the Kalmuks under the Mongol branch, and the now sub-Arctic Ostiaks and Samoyedes under the Uralo-Finnic.

147. *The Tartars of the Oxus.*—There still exists a branch of the Turki stock known as the Kara-Kalpaks, or Black Caps, from the peculiar high sheepskin head-dress which they wear. They form an intermediate link between the southern Turkomans and the northern Kirghiz, and are the survivors of a once powerful nation. As a result of forced or voluntary migrations they are now scattered over a vast area in Tartary and southern Siberia, but their central seat is still in the damp plains of the southern Oxus and along the east coast of the Aral sea. There are about fifty thousand of them in that region, and about two hundred and fifty thousand more are scattered through various parts of the Russian empire. They are described as for the most part tall and robust, with broad flat brows, large eyes, short nose, prominent chin, and broad hands, though their women have the reputation of being the most beautiful in Turkestan. They have lost to a large extent their fierce and nomadic character, and are now a lethargic agricultural race.

148. *Large men, large steeds.*—Most of the Tartars of the Oxus region are of sluggish disposition and of heavy build, while the Turkoman tribes referred to below are more slender, lithe and active, though often of almost equal stature.

149. *Who from Bokhara come.*—The city of Bokhâra is the capital of the present state of the same name. The word is of Mongol origin and means "the city of temples," for the city has long been the most important center of the Mohammedan religion in Turkestan. Such was its fame for learning, even in Mohammed's day, that the prophet is reported to have said of it: "Elsewhere the light descends from above, but in Bokhâra it radiates upward."

It reached the height of its prosperity and literary reputation between the ninth and fourteenth centuries, and still has 100 medresseh, or colleges for the study of the Korân, besides no less than 360 mosques. The city is said by local tradition to have been founded by Alexander the Great, and certainly can not have been in existence at the time of the battle between Sohrâb and Rustam, which must have taken place at least two hundred years before the birth of Alexander.

The present state of Bokhâra occupies the whole territory along the shores of the Oxus, with an extent of 96,000 square miles and a population of over two million. It only attained this size a few years ago, when Russia annexed several smaller states to the original state of Bokhâra (called by the Romans Transoxiana and by the Arabs Maverannahr), which is an oasis near the right bank of the Oxus, on the road leading from Khiva to the Hindu Kush mountains. It includes the ancient Sogdiana, in the basin of the Sogd or Zarafshan river. At the time of the narrative the Black Cap Tartars doubtless occupied the whole region, and a few of them are still to be found in Zarafshan.

150. Khiva, also called Kharezma or Khovarizm, meaning "Low-land" (equivalent to Netherland), is a wonderfully fertile region around the mouth of the Oxus, and also the town which is its capital.

It is an ideal spot, filled with foliage and flowers, abounding in nightingales and other melodious birds, and yielding the most delicious fruits and vegetables, its pistachio nuts, in particular, being renowned throughout Asia. It is surrounded by almost impassible wastes to the south and west, and it took Russia a century and a half (1703-1875) to conquer it from the Uzbeks. The latter are a mixed people of the Turkî stock, speaking the tongue of the Uigurs, the predominating element among them, which is the most polished language of the linguistic group to which it belongs. These Uzbeks, who formerly controlled the basins of the Sir and the Amu, claim descent from the famous Golden Horde that conquered Russia in the thirteenth century. They are still distinguished by the high caps which they wear the year round, and it is perhaps to this tribe of black-cap Tartars that the text especially refers.

151. *And ferment the milk of mares.*—Most of the nomadic Turanian peoples are very fond of kounmys, a refreshing drink which they prepare by fermenting the milk of their mares or camels. By distilling this a fiery alcoholic liquor called araka or arki (the Russian arrack) is produced.

152. *Toorkmuns*, i. e., Turkomans or Turkmenians. This is a general name used by modern ethnologists to designate one of the two main branches of the Turanian or Mongolian race which are to be found in the Aralo-Caspian region, the other branch being the Kirghiz. The Turkomans, who number about a million souls, now inhabit chiefly the region between the Hindu Kush mountains and the Ust-Urt plateau, west of the Aral sea. The typical members of this ethnic group are described as having a broad brow, small and piercing black eyes, a small nose, rather thick lips, ears projecting from the head, a black and scanty beard, and short, thick hair.

153. The Tukas, or Tekkes, are a subdivision of the Turkomans, numbering about 400,000 souls. They are characterized by a piercing glance, and a proud and martial bearing, are tall in stature and very vigorous and active. They now occupy the fertile basin of the Merv (see 212) a few miles north of Herat, and also an oasis, which bears their name, on the head-waters of the river Atrak (n. 155), together with some of the surrounding hills of the Turkoman Caucasus.

There is a Tekes river in the eastern part of Russian Turkestan, rising in the Kung Ala Tau mountains and emptying into the Ili. This

would indicate that in ancient times the Tekkes may have had their seat far to the northeast of their present habitat.

154. *The Lances of Salore*.—The Salore are another subdivision of the Turkomans, and claim to be the noblest of that race, though they now number less than fifteen thousand and are subjects to the Tekkes of Merv.

155. The Attruck, or Atrek, is the largest river flowing into the Caspian sea on its Asiatic side, and gives its name to the whole basin lying between the great Iranian tableland on the south and the Kopet-dagh or Daman-i-Koh ("High Ridge") on the north. The latter is a low range of the Turkoman Caucasus, running east from the Caspian at right angles to it and forming the water-shed between the Atrek and the Uzboi,—as the succession of marshes and salt-pools which represents the ancient course of the Oxus is now called. The Atrek rises near the elevated plain of Kuchan, and is three hundred miles long, but most of its waters are exhausted by evaporation and irrigating channels so that it is only a little stream about thirty feet wide when it reaches the Caspian, except during the spring floods, when it expands to a width of between one and two miles. A short distance south of the Atrek is a smaller stream called the Gurgan, which gave to the region its classical name of Hyrcania.

156. *Light steeds*.—The horse and the camel are still the inseparable companions of the Turkoman nomads. Their horses are unshapely and small, but are almost unequalled in their powers of endurance. Instances are on record of their having covered 600 miles in five or six consecutive days. The native camels are the Bactrian variety, or dromedary, with but one hump. These are smaller than the Arabian, but more capable of withstanding heat.

157. *A swarm of wandering horse*.—These were in their life-habits the true representatives of the Tartar nomads of subsequent times. The nucleus of the Turanian army was probably drawn from the permanent cities, inhabited by populations of a kindred race but more settled habits, which formed the real kingdom of Tûrân.

But the descendants of the citizens of the Turanian towns may today be nomads, and vice versa. It is a well authenticated fact that the ancestors of many of the nomadic tribes of northern Asia once lived in permanent and well-organized states, and only took up a wandering life when dispossessed of their houses and cultivated lands. This has happened, among others, in the case of the Kara-Kirghîz and the Ostiaks.

158. Ferghana, called by the Tartars Kokan or Khokand, is a country which immediately adjoins Bokhâra on the northeast and east, extending northward from the Pamîr mountains between the Sîr and the Ohu rivers. A large proportion of its inhabitants are Turuks or Turks, a people with close affinities both with the the Uzbeqs on the one hand and the Kara-Kirghîz on the other. They are probably the nearest kinsmen of the people of like name by whom the Ottoman empire was founded.

Between 1760 and 1812 Khokand was subject to the Chinese empire, and it was afterwards an independent Khanate, as it had been before, until its conquest by Russia in 1876.

159. The Jaxartes, or Sir Daria, also called the Sihon and referred to also in the poem as the northern Sir. It is a river about seventeen hundred miles long, emptying into the northern part of the sea of Aral, and is, with the Oxus, the chief source of the waters of that lake. It rises near the Tian Shan mountains, a range running from the northern Pamir eastward into the Chinese empire and forming the northern boundary of Eastern or Chinese Turkestan. In ancient times one of the channels into which it is divided in its lower course communicated with the Oxus, through which a large portion of its waters flowed into the Caspian.

160. *Close-set skull-caps*.—Several Tartar peoples, including some branches of the Kirghiz, wear little skull caps, usually rising in a point behind the head.

161. The Kipchak, Kaptchak, or Kibzak is a name applied to south-eastern Russia in the days when it was inhabited by independent peoples of Tartar origin (see n. 45). It included all the country around the head of Caspian, even on the Asiatic side of the Ural.

The Kazaks of the Middle Horde (Urta Yuz), who inhabit the region between the Ural river, the sea of Aral and the basin of the Obi river, are often called the Kipchaks to the present day.

162. The Calmucks or Kalmuks are a group of Mongol tribes, who call themselves the Derben Oirat or Four Confederates. One of these, the Turgut, represents the old Karait tribe, which ruled a large part of Mongolia before the time of Jenghis Khan (see n. 43); another, the Khasad, take their name from a brother of Jenghis Khan, from whom their chiefs were derived. A third tribe, the Jungars, represents the ruling element in the powerful Juen-Juen or Jungarian kingdom which flourished in Eastern Turkestan on the borders of Siberia in the 17th and 18th centuries of our era. It at last accepted the suzerainty of the Chinese, and when it attempted to make itself independent again was utterly wiped out, as it was supposed, in a destructive war in which a million of them lost their lives.

Part of the Turguts had established themselves on Russian territory in 1663, but returned in 1771 to revenge their kinsmen. Multitudes of them perished by war and exposure on the way, and they were absorbed without much ado into the Chinese empire. In 1864 they revolted and re-established the Jungarian kingdom, and it has since been annexed to Russia. They are still numerous in the southern part of the Obi basin and the eastern Altai.

163. *Kuzzaks*.—The Kazaks or Kaizaks, by far the largest of the two main divisions of the Kirghiz branch of the Turki stock. The Kazak-Kirghiz, or Kaizaks, as they call themselves, are divided into four hordes: the Ulu-Yuz, or Great Horde, which is found between the Thian-Shan mountains and Lake Balkash, in Siberia, and is the oldest of the four; the Urta-Yuz, or Middle Horde, occupying the low hilly country north of the Aral sea; the Inner Horde, whose present home is on the Orenburg Steppes, near the upper waters of the river Ural; and the Kachi-Yuz, or Little Horde, which stretches westward far into European Russia, and, in spite of its name, is much the largest and most important of all. It was probably by a fusion of Russian refugees with this branch of the Kirghiz-Kazaks that the dreaded European Kazak or Cossack tribe arose, which has become the most powerful support of the great Slavonic em-

pire of the North. These Kazaks of the Middle Horde have best preserved their ancient type and language and usages, and although they are simple nomads they consider themselves all nobles. When one of them meets another for the first time he at once puts the question, "Who are your seven ancestors?" so that even the children of eight or ten years among them can recite without hesitation the names of their ancestors for seven generations.

164. *Tribes who stray nearest the Pole.*—In these we may see a reference to the Ostiaks and Samoyedes, branches of the Finnish race which occupy much of the northern part of western Siberia. They have been pressed upwards by the Turkî tribes from the region south of the Altai mountains within the historic period. Before the Cossacks conquered Siberia for their Russian masters in the 16th and 17th centuries the Ostiaks had a complete national organization, with regularly built cities and houses, but now they have become mere wandering hunters and fishermen. They worship a god Turm or Turum, a word in which some have been tempted to find a trace of a former subjection to the kingdom founded by Tûr, the son of Feridûn. It is perhaps as likely that the king took his name from the god. It is very probable that it was from this ethnic stem, rather than the Turko-Mongol, that the earliest inhabitants of Turkestân were derived.

165. The Kirghizzes, or more properly the Kirghîz, are one of the main divisions of the Turkî stock. They constitute the largest nomadic race in Asia, numbering between two and three millions. They have no cohesion among themselves, and are split up into innumerable tribes. They compare themselves to the sea-sands, scattered far and wide by the winds, but never decreasing in number. Their two main divisions are Kazak-Kirghîz and the Kara-Kirghîz or Buruts.

The latter, the Black or Wild Mountain Kirghîz, roam over the Thian-Shan, Altai and Pamîr mountains and the surrounding uplands. Those of Thian-Shan are called the Left, and those of the Pamîr the Right branch. Strange to say, they were once a highly civilized people. They are spoken of in the Chinese annals as a powerful commercial nation, and their own bards still sing of the achievements of their ancient heroes. It is possible that they are the true descendants of the original Turanians, who have betaken themselves to these fastnesses to escape the oppression of the nomadic invaders who have swept in successive waves over their ancestral home for more than two thousand years.

166. *Shaggy ponies.*—The Kirghîz horses are sorry in appearance but incredibly hardy. They are accustomed to pick up a subsistence for themselves as they go along, and they have great strength, and endure remarkably well the extremes of heat and cold and the fatigue of long and uninterrupted journeys.

167. *Pamere.*—See n. 127. The Right branch (Ou) of the Black Kirghîz are the only inhabitants of highest levels of the Pamîr plateau. They remain there with their flocks for eight months of the year, but seek in winter the milder climate of the adjacent districts, of lower elevation, on the north and west.

168. *Tartars they seemed, the Ilyats.*—The word Ilyats or Iliats (properly Ilâts), meaning "tribes," is used as the collective designation

of all the nomads within the limits of the present Persian kingdom, especially those of Tartar descent. Their number increases or diminishes according to the political vicissitudes of the country, multitudes adopting nomadic habits as the result of oppression or other disasters, and a portion of the migratory population reverting to town life in periods of general prosperity. Ever since the dawn of history there has been a Turanian element as well as an Aryan one on the plateau of Irân, and a considerable proportion of its present inhabitants are known to be of Tartar descent. The government has been in the hands of different Tûrki peoples most of the time since the 11th century of the Christian era, and at the present time the government officials and soldiers are for the most part of such origin, while the true Persians have almost a monopoly of intellectual and business pursuits. But the settled population, of whatever extraction, has become thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Persian nationality, and takes pride in all the traditions of Iranian glory, while the Ilyats still have the spirit of restless Turân. This has been illustrated in recent wars between the Persian government and Ilyat rebels; the Persians marched to battle chanting passages from the Shah Nâma, while the Ilyats stimulated each other's courage by singing the war songs of Kurroglou, a famous character among them in the 17th century, who combined the professions of bard and freebooter, with phenomenal success in each. It is an anachronism to represent the Ilyats as taking part on the Iranian side in a battle that took place 2,400 years ago, as they are descended from tribes that have entered the country not earlier than the first Turkish conquest of 1038.

169. *Bright in burnished steel.*—The Shah Nâma habitually represents both the warriors of Irân and Tûrân as being clad in coats of mail. The Iranian hosts on a certain occasion are said to present the appearance of a "sea of armor." The most highly prized armor, according to Firdausi, was imported from Rûm (i.e., Syria and Asia Minor).

170. *Ferood, who led the Persians.*—This is an anachronism, for the Iranian host was commanded on this occasion by the Shah Kai Kâûs in person. Firûd was the son of the crown prince Siâvush, who himself does not appear to have been born until after the death of Sohrâb (see p. 25).

171. *Pedlars from Cabool.*—Cabul or Kabûl, anciently Ortospand or Cabura, is the capital of the present kingdom of Afghanistân.

Since the remotest times, Kabûl and Kandahar have been considered as the keys to India, the first controlling the road to Tûrân, and the other that to Irân. Being located on the historic road between India and Bactria, close to the passes of the Hindu Kush which connect the Uralo-Caspian basin with the Panjâb, or upper Indus basin, it has naturally been from the earliest times a great emporium of trade, controlling the traffic between southern and western Asia. It is situated in a fertile plain, watered by a river of the same name, and offers every resource to the caravans that undertake the toilsome journey across the mountains. It has an altitude of six thousand feet, which gives it a delightfully temperate climate. Kabûl was certainly in existence before the time of Alexander the Great, and is believed by its citizens to be the oldest city in the world. The local legends represent the devil as having fallen there when he was cast from heaven, and the city prides itself in the pos-

session of the tomb of Cain! This city was chosen for its loveliness as the capital of the Mogul empire by the Sultân Baber, at the end of the 16th century, and a beautiful white marble mausoleum in his honor stands in the gardens near the city.

172. *The Indian Caucasus*.—This is identical with the Hindo-Koh, or "Mountains of India," commonly known as the Hindu Kush. The latter is a nickname, meaning "Hindu Killer," and was given in allusion to the great mortality among the traders who crossed its dangerous passes or risked their lives amid its snows to retail their wares to the villagers and nomads of the Turkestân highlands.

On the south and southwest it is in some places more than twenty-five thousand feet high, and several of its passes cross at an elevation of sixteen thousand feet. This great mountain range runs in a westerly direction from the southern terminus of the Pamîr. The name Indian Caucasus is often applied to it by modern geographers, who look upon it as belonging to the same system as the Armenian Caucasus, which, after being interrupted by the Caspian sea, is continued to the east and southeast by the so-called Turkoman Caucasus, which connects with the Hindu Kush.

173. *Choked by the air*.—Major-General Donald MacIntyre, in his "Hindu Koh, or Wanderings and Wild Sport on the Himâlaya" (1889), gives a vivid description of the sufferings of himself and his party on account of the rarified air of the upper passes in this region. It produced shortness of breath, an oppressive feeling of inability to fully inflate the lungs, and a sensation of heaviness in the body and especially the legs, accompanied by a severe headache, nausea, and sometimes bleeding of the nose.

Even the Tartar guides who are accustomed to make the trip frequently never fail to experience at least a headache. They often eat raw onions as a means of preventing or moderating these unpleasant symptoms. The line of perpetual snow is here at an altitude of 16,000 feet, though on the Tibetan table-lands, owing to the extreme dryness of the atmosphere, it is as high as 20,000 feet.

174. *Sugared mulberries*.—Mulberries are a favorite fruit among the Orientals, and those of Kabûl are celebrated, like its other fruits, for their delicious flavor. In Khiva and other fertile oases of the Aralo-Caspian region, it is customary to encircle the cultivated fields with avenues of mulberry trees.

175. *For fear they should dislodge the overhanging snows*.—The traveler who crosses the passes of the Hindu Kush, or Western Himâlayas, is exposed to constant danger, especially in the spring season, from the loosening of huge masses of snow, often bringing with them fragments of rock and frozen earth, which come tumbling down the mountain side, carrying everything before them, and often blocking the roadway and burying beneath them any men or animals who may be passing along it. The danger from this source is so great that at times it renders the passes wholly impracticable.

176. *Gudurz*.—Gudurz was a famous Persian warrior, whose ancestor, Kâva the Blacksmith (see p. 20), headed the war for independence by which the Semitic usurper was dethroned, and Feridûn, the descendant of Jemshîd, placed on the Persian throne. Gudurz had eighty sons, the best known of whom are Gav, Bahram and Rehham. See n, 104,

177. *Zoarrah*.—Perhaps Zereh is meant, the man who is a later episode cut off the head of the Persian prince Siâvush, when the latter was put to death by the king of Tûrân (see p. 27). He was perhaps one of the Iranian knights who followed the prince to the court of Afrâsiâb, but he deserted him in his hour of danger, and sought to win the royal favor by this act of insult to the body of his former master.

178. *Feraburz . . . the uncle of the King*.—Feraburz, or Friburz, was the uncle of Kai Khosrû, but according to the Persian traditions the event which this poem celebrates took place in the reign of the latter's predecessor, Kai Kâûs. Friburz was the son of Kai Kâûs by Sudâva, daughter of the king of Hamaverân (see p. 25). He several times commanded the armies of his royal father and nephew, but at a time subsequent to that of the narrative, and some of the Iranian nobles favored his succession to his father's throne, which was finally given to the son of Siâvush Kai Khosrû. His name seems to signify "Iburz, the illustrious," and he is probably the *Æbaras* of classic authors.

179. *Of scarlet cloth they were*.—Among the Tartar nomads of the present day a red tent is still a mark of royal rank, real or alleged (see n. 128). Many of the Kazak chiefs affect this dignity by right of a grant of the title of Sultân from the Russian government.

180. *A side of roasted sheep, etc.*—This diet, as solid as it is, was more dainty than that usually ascribed to Rustam in the *Shah Nâma*. The latter represents him as habitually subsisting on the flesh of the wild ass, a food still esteemed in that region. This animal, on account of the difficulty of its pursuit and its dangerousness when enraged, was the favorite game of the Iranian lords, and Rustam was particularly famous for his prowess in the chase as well as in war. He is represented on numerous occasions as going to hunt when his appetite moved him, killing some of these animals with his own hand, and devouring a whole carcass at a single sitting and without condiments, to the great admiration of the beholder!

181. *Held a falcon on his wrist*.—The art of falconry, or hunting with the aid of trained falcons, has been practiced in many parts of Asia from a prehistoric period. The Japanese were acquainted with it when they first migrated from Korea to the islands which they now occupy, about 600 B.C.; and the Chinese claim to have hunted in this fashion for more than thirty-five hundred years. The figure of a man holding a falcon on his wrist has been found on an Assyrian monument dating from the seventeenth century B.C. It is still the favorite recreation, both of men and children, in the country over which Rustam ruled (southern Afghanistan).

182. *If Iran's chiefs are old, then I am older*.—Well might he say so, for, according to the figures given in the *Shah Nâma*, he was several hundred years old, and even according to the most moderate interpretation of the traditional chronology in harmony with the classic authors, he must have been at least 110.

Rustam can speak of himself in distinction from "Irân's chiefs," because his own kingdom, though acknowledging the Shah's suzerainty, was itself very powerful and practically independent.

183. *Rustam he loves no more, but loves the young*.—In the *Shah Nâma* the hero's grievance is of quite a different character (see p. 38).

184. The Afghans proper, who call themselves the Pushti, or Pukhti, claim for the most part to be descended from a prince of that name whose father, Jeremial, was one of the sons of Saul, king of Israel. This claim is in itself of little significance, however, as they are Moham-medans, and the historians of every nation professing that religion have exercised all possible ingenuity in finding a place for it in the Biblical genealogies. But it is a remarkable fact that their features are of a decidedly Jewish cast. Their language is Aryan in its character, and closely allied to the Persian and to the Hindî, the language spoken by the neighboring people, but their names would indicate a Uralo-Finnic origin.

The Pushti claim to have been the earliest inhabitants of the region, and must be identified with the Paktys of classic authors, who gave their name to Bactria (the northern part of the country), and also with the Bâlhîkas of the Hindus, mentioned in the Mahâbhârata (fifth century, B.C.), from which form of the word comes the name of the ancient capital city, Balkh. At any rate, enough is known of the general condition of society at that period, as well as of the character of this border-land at all periods, to make it more than probable that on the southeastern (the present Beluchistân) and the northeastern (Afghanistân) borders of the kingdom of the Sâmâs (see nn. 81, 135) there existed, even in the time of Rustam, predatory tribes who were in the habit of vexing the borders of the neighboring states, both those of Irân on the west and those of India on the east.

185. *Clad himself in steel.*—Steel, which is a compound of iron and carbon, exists in nature, and has been made artificially from the earliest times. It was in common use in Assyria, with which country many of the Iranian tribes had been in constant relations for centuries prior to the time of Cyrus.

186. *The arms he chose were plain.*—This differs from the account in Firdausi, for which see p. 40.

187. Persia abounds in precious metals, and gold has been mined there and all through Central Asia since the prehistoric period and used for decorative purposes of all kinds.

188. The Assyrian helmet, as shown on the monuments, often had a high projecting ridge or central spine.

189. As in the case of many other epic heroes, Rustam's war-horse shares his master's fame. Ruksh or Rakush was to the Hero of Sêistân what Babieca was to the Cid, Goldenbridle to Roland, or Arion to Hercules. He was picked out by Rustam on first reaching manly years. All the horses of Zabulistân and its then tributary kingdom of Kabûl were passed before him one after another by his father Zâl, and they all shuddered and sank upon their haunches when he laid his mighty hand upon their backs to test their strength. At last there came along a mare of prodigious size and power, accompanied by her colt, a stallion "with the size and shoulders of a lion, and in strength resembling an elephant, and in color like rose leaves on a saffron ground."

For three years it had been ready for the saddle, but the mother had never permitted any one to ride it until Rustam came. It had already begun to be called by the people Rustam's Rakush ("Lightning"), for it was among horses what the wonderful young prince already appeared to be among men.

When the owner knew that it was Rustam who wanted it, he gave it to him, "that seated upon it he might deliver Irân from its oppressors."

When Rustam went forth to war or to the chase Rakush always accompanied him, and when the hero laid him down to sleep on the sand of the desert or the greensward of the plain Rakush watched by his side and gave warning of approaching danger.

Several times the horse and his master had fought together against wild beasts, or nameless monsters, or human enemies, and on one occasion at least he saved his master's life, when he was about to be crushed in the folds of an enormous dragon in Mazinderân.

When at last Rustam comes to an end (see p. 32), Rakush, according to Firdausi, detected the danger and did his best to save his master from destruction by refusing to go forward into the pit which had been dug for him; and Rustam only succeeded in compelling him to do so by using a whip upon him for the first and only time in their lives. Then the faithful animal was "grieved in his soul" and leaped into the midst of the spears, and there he and his master at once received their death wounds.

190 *Dight*, derived from the Anglo-Saxon *dihtan*, "to arrange, to set in order." This word, which is no longer used, except in poetry, means arranged, disposed, prepared, made ready. In its present context it is equivalent to "girt."

191. *By sandy Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf*.—The word Bahrein signifies in Arabic "the Two Seas," and is probably derived from the two large bodies of water separated by the Katar peninsula which projects northward on the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf. It is applied to the gulf west of that peninsula, and also to the numerous islands which this contains. The principal one of these islands and the largest in the whole Persian Gulf is called Bahrein Island.

It is here that the famous pearl fisheries of the Persian Gulf have their center. The great pearl bank runs parallel with the coast for about two hundred miles, and no less than fifty thousand persons are employed in this industry in the Bahrein archipelago alone.

The pearl fisherman, after closing his nostrils with a clasp, plugging up his ears with wax, and attaching a stone to his feet, dives in water from thirty to two hundred feet deep, scoops up as many oysters as he can, and comes to the surface with them in about fifty or sixty seconds. This dangerous descent is made seven or eight times a day, and the number of divers devoured annually by the sharks and swordfishes averages over thirty.

The pearl fisheries of Bahrein have existed from prehistoric times, and the ancients obtained from them most of their supply of this gem. The pearls yielded are not so white as those of Ceylon and Japan, but are of larger size and more regular in form.

192. *Down through the middle of the rich man's corn*.—The word "corn" is used here in its usual European sense of grain. It is an old Anglo-Saxon word originally applied to cereals of every kind. At present it usually means in England either wheat, oats, rice or barley, and in Scotland is restricted to oats, while in the United States it is rarely used of any grain except the Indian corn or maize. The simile

becomes intelligible when it is understood that there is question of a wheat or oat field.

193. *As some rich woman . . . eyes through the silken curtains the poor drudge*.—Critics have justly taken exception to this simile, which is “so entirely modern that it strikes a jarring note.” See *Edinburgh Review*, October, 1882.

194. *So slender*.—Fridausi, on the contrary, represents Sohrâb as huge and massive, calling him, like his father, “elephant-bodied” and emphasizing the prodigy of such a physique in so youthful a champion.

195. *Some single tower . . . builded on the waste*.—The erection of towers and other fortifications as a protection against the nomadic banditti who have always infested the deserts in this part of Asia has been of frequent occurrence since the earliest times. The ruins of a great wall, with towers at frequent intervals, reared according to tradition by Iskander or Alexander the Great, but more probably by Khosrav Anosharvân (A.D. 531–579), to protect Irân against Turkish spoilers, extend from the upper waters of the Atrek river down along the whole length of the Gurgan (see n. 155) for some miles out in the Caspian Sea, the waters of which now submerge a long stretch of what was dry land at the time that this line of defences was thrown up.

196. *Oxus with his summer floods*.—The Oxus has an annual flood, lasting from May to October, caused by the melting of the snows on the Pamîr plateau and the other mountain regions that it drains.

197. *Hurled his spear*.—Spears, lances or javelins have been in use in central and western Asia since prehistoric times. On the Assyrian monuments many different kinds are depicted, with heads barbed or unbarbed, oblong, leaf-shaped, etc., etc.

198. *Full struck Rustam's shield*.—The use of the shield in Western Asia goes back to a very remote antiquity. The round and convex form, in particular, is often pictured on the Assyrian monuments of all ages.

199. *Hyphasis or Hydaspes*.—The Hyphasis is the classic name of the river Satadru or Shutudri, now called Satlej. It is the same as the Zaradeus of Ptolemy and the Hecudeus of Pliny. The Hydaspes is the Vitasta, now the Jhelan. These are two of the principal rivers of the Panjâb, the part of India just east of the southern part of Afghanistan.

The Panjâb is the modern Persian word corresponding to the old Hindu name of Panchanâda, or Five Rivers. The Indus flows through it, after leaving the valley of Kashmîr and receiving the waters of the Kabûl river; and in the lower part of the Panjâb the river Chinab enters the Indus from the east, bringing with it the waters of the four other rivers which, with it, give the province its name. The Hydaspes rises in Kashmîr, of which the capital, Srinagera, is on its banks. It is also celebrated for a great battle between Alexander the Great and one of the native kings, which took place near it in 326 B.C.

The Hyphasis, or Satlej, rises on the tableland near the source of the Indus and the Brahmaputra, breaks through the Himâlayas, and at last joins the Chenab not far above its junction with the Indus. The famous sacred river of India, the Sarasvatî, which now loses itself in the desert to the eastward of the Satlej, used to form part of the same system, and therefore in primitive times the region was known both to the Hindus

and the Iranians as the Seven Rivers (in the Veda *Sapta Sindhava* and in the Avesta *Hapta Hindu*).

All five of the existing tributaries of the Panjâb system are of large volume, and through most of their course they are broad and shallow, running through sandy plains and constantly changing their channels. The outer hills of the Himâlayan range, which form the northeastern side of the triangular Panjâb (the other two boundaries being the Hyphasis and the Indus), are covered with forests, as are the deep narrow gorges of the higher mountains through which the Hyphasis bursts.

200. *Himalayan*.—The Himâlayas constitute the southern slope of the great Tibetan tableland, which is a vast rocky protuberance of the earth's mass entirely without a counterpart elsewhere. It is nearly two thousand miles long, and from one hundred to five hundred miles in width. The average altitude of this whole region is between fifteen and twenty thousand feet; and the Himâlaya itself, the lofty ridge which forms its southern parapet, culminates in peaks of nearly thirty thousand feet, the highest points on the earth's surface. The Sanscrit word Himâlaya means "Realm of Snow" from *him*, snow, and *alaya*, abode. The short *a* in Sanscrit always has an obscure sound, like *e* in merge, and cannot receive an accent; but the pronunciation which the rhythm requires in our present text—Himala'ya—is tolerated in English usage, though gradually disappearing.

201. *Wrack*.—The same word as wreck, which in Middle English had many diverse spellings, such as *wrak*, *wrek*, *wrec*, etc. It means not only "anything cast upon the seashore," but also "the destruction of a ship," and finally destruction or ruin of any kind.

202. *That autumn-star, the baleful sign of fevers*.—In the fall the sun passes through the constellations *Libra*, *Scorpio* and *Sagittarius*. The reference is doubtless to the bright red star *Alpha Scorpionis* or *Antares*, sometimes called "the Heart of the Scorpion," by far the most brilliant and striking star in this part of the Zodiac.

203. *As two eagles on one prey*.—This simile is the subject of very general admiration, and several writers have singled it out of the whole poem as particularly in the very spirit of the *Iliad*.

204. *A breeding eagle setting on her nest, etc.*—"An admirable illustration of Arnold's thorough self-discipline, elevated by the study of Hellenic models, is seen in the introduction of the comparison of the two eagles to illustrate Rustam's ignorance of the desolation which his own hand had wrought by the death of his son. . . . Observe how his abstention from word-painting fixes the mind upon the one point that the comparison is designed to illustrate."—*Edinburgh Review*, Oct. 1888, p. 365.

205. *The valiant Koords*.—The Koords, or Kurds, are a class of warlike mountaineers, who occupy most of the uplands on both sides of the frontier of Western Persia, both on the northwest, towards Russian Transcaucasia, and to the west towards the valley of the Tigris, which still belongs to the Ottoman empire. They give their name—*Kurdîstân*—to a part of the region that they occupy, which is equivalent, in a general way, to the ancient Assyria.

The Kurds are a mixed race, but seem to be chiefly of a mingled Iranian and Semitic stock. There is a class of nobles among them called

Assiarti, and a much more numerous class, called *Guran*, are looked upon as the descendants of some conquered race. Those of Armenia, who have doubtless given their name to the rest, seem to represent the Kurdraha mentioned on some of the ancient monuments, and the Kardukhi, or Gordhyans, of the Greek historians. They have constantly received accessions of outlaws and adventurers from all the peoples of the region, and it may be that the Assiarti are descended from noble Assyrian refugees. Many of the Kurds lead a predatory life, and have for centuries been dreaded as the most dangerous of brigands.

At a period shortly prior to that of Rustam the mountains which separate Persia proper from the Tigris valley were the seat of the highly cultured kingdom or province of Susiana (Elam), but the Median mountains to the northward—a continuation of the same range—were even then the home of predatory tribes, who were a constant source of annoyance both to the Assyrians and the Medes on whose frontier they lay.

206. *Like some rich hyacinth*.—This simile has been the object of the special admiration of the most esteemed critics.

207. *That the hard iron corselet clanked aloud*.—The cuirasses or corselets of the Assyrians, Egyptians and other neighboring peoples at that day were usually made not of metal but of flax, thickly plaited or interwoven, and rendered in a measure weapon-proof by cementing thickly with glue. Thus they corresponded to the bullet-proof coats of the present day rather than to the coats-of-mail of medieval times.

208. *As a cunning workman, in Pekin, pricks with vermilion some clear porcelain vase*.—Porcelain was invented in China during the Han dynasty (1260 to 1368 A.D.). After the two clayey substances from which alone the true porcelain can be made have been ground and mingled together into a fine paste, the vase or other vessel is shaped on the potter's wheel, then set to dry, after which the color decoration is applied and the whole covered with a transparent glaze produced by immersion in an almost pure felspar rock fused at an intense heat. The design is laboriously picked out by the skilful hand of the artist on ground-works of various colors. In producing red hues oxide of copper is generally used.

209. *That griffin which of old reared Zal*.—The gryphes or griffin was described to the historian Herodotus (born 484 B.C.) by Asiatic traders as a kind of animal resembling an eagle that lived in the territory of a Scythian (North Asiatic) tribe called the Arimaspi, beside a river the sands of which were golden, and defended the vast quantity of gold that existed there, tearing to pieces any one who sought to obtain it. Thenceforth it often appears in European story and art, and in later times became a favorite heraldic bearing. The griffin is always described and depicted as of the eagle family, and usually as having the hinder parts of a lion or a serpent. It has been supposed that the story took its origin in some way from the gold mines of the Altai mountains (in western Mongolia), which were worked even in prehistoric times by the Chudes, a great Finno-Samoyedic nation that flourished there before the irruption of the Turko-Mongol tribes from the east.

The traditions of all Central Asia abound in monsters a similar type. One of the most familiar subjects of Assyrian sculpture was a symbolic animal—half lion and half eagle—a perfect griffin; and the Indo-Iranian

traditions give great prominence to bird-like creatures of great size to which they ascribe a sacred or prophetic character, such as the Garuda of the Hindus, the king of birds and vehicle of the god Vishnu, half eagle, half man, and with a golden body. The Iranians honored the bird Karshiya as the first prophet of the true religion, and the *saēna* "eagle," afterward known as the *šn-amrta*, "amru-falcon," and finally contracted into *simūrgh*, was looked upon by them as a great benefactor of the race.

The *Simūrgh* by which, according to the Persian legend, Zāl was reared, was probably nothing other than a prince of the *Saēna* house who had his castle on Mt. Elburz. The *Saēna* or *Simūrgh* family is mentioned in the Avesta, and doubtless derived its name from the eagle, or eagle-like creature, borne on its standard.

210. The *Helmund*, *Hilmend* or *Helmand*, known to the Greek geographers as the *Etymander* or *Arimanthus*, and called in the Avesta the *Haētumant*, rises in the mountains about thirty-six miles east of *Kabûl*, and after flowing for some distance at an elevation of about twelve thousand feet, descends into the plain. It loses itself at last in the central depression of *Sêistân* (n. 135), which is usually known as the Lake *Hamûn*, though for the greater part of the year the water disappears from it almost entirely save at the points near the mouths of the two principal tributary rivers, the *Helmand* and *Harut*, whose waters spread out into a considerable expanse before losing themselves in the sands. The lower portion of the river waters *Sêistân* and upon the central and upper portions of it was situated in *Rustam's* time its sister-kingdom of *Zabulistân* (n. 81).

The *Helmand* is the most copious river between the *Indus* and the *Tigris*, and with its tributaries it waters an area of more than a hundred and fifty thousand square miles. The word *Hilmend* is said to mean "Embanked River," and a large part of it must from a very remote period been drawn off into the surrounding deserts for irrigating purposes, as at the present time.

211. The so-called lake of *Zirrah*, or *Zirreh*, is another dried up lake-basin southward of that of the *Hamûn*, and included like it within the territory of *Sêistân*. During the greater part of the year it is a waterless plain, encrusted with a salty deposit, and in the wettest seasons it rarely becomes more than a swamp, all the rivers that flow in this direction from *Beluchistân* being completely evaporated or swallowed up in the sands soon after leaving the hills. A few centuries ago, however, it was, like the *Hamûn* lake, a permanent lake of some importance, and it may have formed a part of the great interior sea which is supposed to have covered a large part of the Iranian plateau down nearly if not quite to the historic period (n. 218).

212. The *Murgh-ab* and *Te-jend* rivers rise near the western extremity of the Hindu Kush mountains, their sources being separated by the highlands known as the *Sefid-Koh*, or *White Mountains*. The *Murgh-ab* is the river of *Merv*, and all of its waters are used in the irrigating canals that water the oasis of that name, which forms a little Turkoman principality (the last remnant of "Independent Tartary"), between *Persia*, *Afghanistân* and *Bokhârâ*.

The *Tejend*, also known as the *Ieri-rud*, or river of *Ierât*, the strong

fortified city of that name being situated near its upper waters. It flows westward for a while among the hills until it reaches the Persian line, and then stretches in a northerly direction across the frontier of Turkestan, forming a great interior basin—the principal one between the Caspian and the Oxus—and finally disappearing in the desert.

The country watered by these two rivers corresponds to the Margiana of Greek and Latin authors.

213. Kohik is another name for the Zerafshan river, for which see n. 131, ¶ 2.

214. *Where the Kalmuks feed their sheep*.—Some of the survivors of the Kalmuk tribes now pasture their flocks on the banks of the Sîr, and their remote ancestors under other names may well have done so in the time of Rustam, as Western Mongolia, their earliest known habitat, is not far away (see n. 162).

215. *Oh, that I saw its grains of yellow silt . . . roll in the current*.—The Oxus holds in solution a considerable quantity of earthy matter, which gives its waters a bright yellow color, though not interfering with their wholesomeness and pleasant taste.

216. *Silt*, from the middle English verb *silen*, to strain or filter, is defined as an earthy sediment or fine mud deposited from either running or standing water.

217. *Heap a stately mound above thy bones*.—Although the Iranian sacred books (n. 54) forbid the pollution of the soil by the interment of the dead, that disposition of the body is known to have been practiced by Cyrus, immediately after the time of Rustam. It is probable that this law was not introduced until after the time of the reformer Zarathustra, who lived, according to Persian tradition, at a period somewhat subsequent to that of our narrative. The custom of rearing lofty mounds above the honored dead is a Scythian or Turanian one, and confirms the statement of the Pahlavi books that the Sâmas were descendants of Târ.

218. *Returning home over the salt blue sea*.—Firdausi represents Kai Kâûs as on one occasion traversing with his army a great salt sea in order to reach Arabia and Egypt from Sêistân. This is supposed to refer to the great interior sea, the Kâsava (and perhaps the Pûitika) of the Avesta, that once spread over a wide expanse in the central plateau of Irân, and which was represented, when Firdausi wrote, by lakes Hamûn (n. 210) and Zirrah (n. 211).

Kai Khosrû or Cyrus is variously represented as having died in battle, or in his palace, or in retirement in the forests; if his decease had occurred on the banks of the upper Oxus, where this dialogue took place, or elsewhere in Eastern Irân, his body would naturally have been carried across the interior sea to his capital city of Pasargardæ, where he is known to have been buried.

Firdausi gives no account whatever of the death of Kai Kâûs, in whose reign he supposes the encounter between Rustam and Sohrâb to have taken place.

219. *Those black granite pillars, once high-reared by Jemshîd in Persepolis*.—The ruins of Persepolis ("the city of Persia"), the capital of Persia under most of the Achæmenidæ, are called by the modern inhabitants of Irân Takhti Jamshîd, or "Throne of Jemshîd," and are sup-

posed by them to be the remains of the city of Var or Ver, built by that primeval monarch, from which the name of Persia (Pars or Fars) is derived. But the cuneiform inscriptions upon the buildings at Persepolis show them to have been the work of the immediate successors of Cyrus; and the city appears to have been founded by Darius Hystaspes, or at least to have been made by him for the first time the capital of the country, in place of Pasargardæ (probably the modern Pasa or Fasa). Some think that the Var Jemsgard was farther north, near the present towns of Demagan and Kasbin (see n. 141); but it is more probable that it was not a city at all, but a general name for the whole region finally occupied by the Iranian people, extending from the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf and eastward to the Pamir.

The ruins at Persepolis are magnificent and imposing in the highest degree. They occupy a great terrace on the mountain-side, at the junction of the rivers Pulwar and Kur (Cyrus). This terrace, which is reached by a noble staircase of very easy ascent, is covered with the remains of a number of colossal palaces and colonnades, all made of what is described as an exquisite dark grey marble from the neighboring mountains. Among the most majestic of these were the Hall of a Hundred Columns, built by Darius, and the vast Throne Pavilion of Xerxes.

Some of the huge pillars are still standing, and innumerable others lie prostrate on the sloping surface of the terrace. Many of the fluted columns of the pavilion of Xerxes are found to be nearly sixty-four feet high, by actual measurement.

220. *Chorasmian waste*.—Chorasmia, which is mentioned by Herodotus (fifth century B. C.) as furnishing its contingent to the army of Darius, is the modern Khiva (n. 150). Its king became independent of the later Achæmenian emperors, and ruled over a great territory extending, it is said, even over the steppes to the north and west of the Caspian. The term seems, therefore, to have been so extended as to be practically equivalent to Tûrân, which had been several times subjugated by the Iranian princes, but as often threw off their yoke.

By "Chorasmian waste," our author certainly means to designate the desert which surrounds the Oxus, save in places redeemed by irrigation and thereby turned into veritable gardens of delight.

221. *Orgunjé*, that is, Urgenj, the name still borne by the largest city on the lower Oxus. It is built on the left bank, about twenty-four miles northwest of Khiva, and is called also Yani Urgenj (new Urgenj) to distinguish it from old (Kunia) Urgenj. The latter was ruined in the sixteenth century by the shifting of the course of the Oxus; as it was located on the channel by which the river found its way to the Caspian sea. This channel branches off from the present one at a point just below the New City. It is almost certain that in the time of Cyrus and Rustam the river flowed into the Caspian, though the changes in its channel since that time in the region of the two towns must have been numerous and very considerable.

222. *The shorn and parcelled Oxus strains along through beds of sand, etc.*—At present the Oxus—or what is left of it after supplying the irrigating canals by which the country above is watered—begins, soon after passing Urgenj, to lose itself in the vast swamps through which,

by numerous and ever-changing channels filled with reeds and swamp-grass, it gradually finds its way into the Aral.

223. This closing description of the Oxus has been the subject of much controversy among the critics. It is admitted to be one of the most beautiful passages that ever fell from Arnold's pen; but some doubt whether the suggestion that the great river flows quietly onwards undisturbed by the love and hate of men is not in false taste, and whether the poem should not have more appropriately ended, for example, with:

"So on the bloody sand Sohrab lay dead."

(Edinburgh Review, October, 1882.) One critic says that this is one of several poems by Arnold containing "fine terminal passages which are as much out of place as an account of the fall of Troy would have been in Homer's great epic on the wrath of Achilles. Sohrab and Rustum, that lofty narrative of a son's death by the hands of an unconscious father, should surely have ended with the line—

'And Rustum and his son were left alone'

(British Quarterly Review, October 2, 1865, p. 243)."

But these very respectable cavillers are unquestionably in the wrong, from the standpoint of Arnold's own ideals of poetic beauty, for consistency with which, whatever may be thought of their correctness, he cannot well be blamed. The Edinburgh tempers its criticism by the remark that "this introduction of nature as solace to over-wrought feelings is eminently characteristic of the poet." But the true significance of the passage is in the principle "art is dedicated to joy," laid down by Arnold in his preface of 1853. The last word of a tragic poem should be an uplifting one. It must either expand the heart by exhibiting a sublime existence or law in the presence of which all human woes appear trifling; or, as in this case, calm the spirit with the vision of an enduring beauty and repose which the errors and strifes of man cannot mar or interrupt.

Henry G. Hewlett has well observed that one of the most impressive touches of art in the whole poem "is the recurring reference to the presence of the great river beside which the tragedy is enacted, that contrasts the calm dignity of its course with the unseemly turbulence of human passions, its unexhausted permanence with their transience and decay."

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